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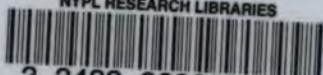
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SELECT
PRACTICAL WRITINGS
OF
RICHARD BAXTER,
WITH A
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

BY LEONARD BACON,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN NEW HAVEN.

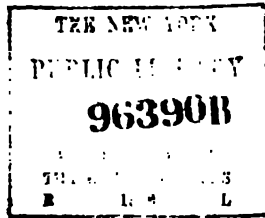
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THE CHARACTER
OF A
SOUND, CONFIRMED CHRISTIAN;
AS ALSO
OF A WEAK CHRISTIAN,
AND
OF A SEEMING CHRISTIAN.

**WRITTEN TO IMPRINT UPON MEN'S MINDS THE TRUE IDEA OR
CONCEPTION OF GODLINESS AND CHRISTIANITY.**



THE
PREFACE;

DIRECTED TO MY WORTHY FRIEND, HENRY ASHURST, ESQ. CITIZEN
OF LONDON.

DEAR AND FAITHFUL FRIEND,

WHEN this book was printed and passing into the world, without the ordinary ornament of a prefixed honored name, my thoughts reduced me into the common way, though not upon the common reasons; assuring me that your name would be more than an accident or ceremony to such a discourse as this; even a part more substantial than a map is in a treatise of geography, or the well-cut figures in tractates of anatomy. Discourses of navigation, architecture, music, &c. may almost as hopefully instruct the learners, without any visible operations or effects, as the characters of well-tempered Christians can duly inform the minds of ignorant, ungodly men, of so divine a thing as Christianity and godliness, without acquaintance with some such persons, in whom these characters are manifestly exemplified. Wise and holy precepts, are to make wise and holy persons: it is such persons as well as such precepts which bear the image of God; which indeed is most perfect in exactness and integrity in the precepts; (for in them is no imperfection or error, as they are of God;) but it is of greater final excellency, in activity and usefulness as it is in men. And therefore as God delighteth in his servants, and is glorified in and by them in the world, so Satan usually chooseth such persons, to reproach and make odious to the ignorant, rather than the holy precepts immediately, by which they are directed; both because their holiness is most exasperating by activity; and also most liable to calumny and contempt, through imperfection, and mixture of that which indeed is worthy of dislike. Till godliness and Christianity be visible in full perfection, and elevated above the contradiction of folly, and the contempt of pride, the blind, distracted minds of hardened, forsaken sinners, will not acknowledge its divine, cele-

tial nature and worth ; but then it will be too late to become partakers of it ; they must both know and possess it in its infancy and minority, who will ever enjoy it in its heavenly dignity and glory. If seasonable illumination and conversion confute not the deceits and slanders which pride and ignorance have entertained, the too late confutation of them by death and their following experience, will make them wish, that they had been wise at cheaper rates, when it will be in vain to cry, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are out ;" **Matt. xxv. 8.**

But while I offer your name to the malicious world, as an instance of the temper which I here describe, I intend it not as a singular though an eminent instance : for through the great mercy of God, there are thousands of examples of confirmed Christians among us in this land, even before those eyes that will not see them. But it is not catalogues, but single names, which writers have used in this way. And why may I not take the advantage of custom, to leave to the world the testimony of my estimation and great respects, to so deserving a person of the primitive Christian, catholic temper : and to let them know, what sort of men were my most dear and faithful friends ? And also thus to express my love, by telling you closely what you must be, as well as by telling the world for their example what you are ? Upon these accounts, without your knowledge or consent, I presume thus to prefix your name to this treatise, written long ago, but now published by

Your faithful Friend,

RICHARD BAXTER.

From my Lodging in New Prison, June 14, 1669.



TO THE READER.

READERS,

It is a matter of a greater moment than I can express, what idea or image of the nature of godliness and Christianity is imprinted upon men's minds. The description which is expressed in the sacred Scriptures, is true and full : the thing described is rational, pure, perfect, unblamable and amiable. That which is expressed in the lives of the most, is nothing so ; but is purblind, defiled, maimed, imperfect, culpable, and mixed with so much of the contrary quality, that to them that cannot distinguish the chaff from the wheat, the sickness from the life, it seemeth an unreasonable, fanciful, loathsome and vexatious thing, and so far from being worthy to be preferred before all the riches, honors and pleasures of the world, that it seemeth worthy to be kept under as a troubler of kingdoms, societies and souls. And doubtless this monstrous expression of it in men's lives, is because the perfect expression of it in God's word hath not made a true impression upon the mind, and consequently upon the heart. For as it is sound doctrine which must make sound Christians, so doctrine worketh on the will and affections, not as it is in itself, and as delivered, but as it is understood, believed, remembered, considered ; even as it is imprinted on the mind, and used by it. And as interposed matter, or defective application may cause the image on the wax to be imperfect, though made by the most perfect seal ; so it is in this case, when one man doth defectively understand the Scripture description of a godly man or Christian, and another by misunderstanding mixeth false conceptions of his own ; and another by a corrupt, depraved will doth hinder the understanding from believing, or remembering, or considering and using what it partly apprehendeth ; what wonder if the godliness and Christianity in their hearts be unlike the godliness and Christianity in the Scriptures ? When the law of God, in nature and Scripture is pure and uncorrupt, and the law of God written imperfectly on the heart, is there mixed with the carnal law in their members, no marvel if it be expressed accordingly in their lives.

I have therefore much endeavored in all my writings and especially in this, to draw out the full portraiture of a Christian or godly man indeed, and to describe God's image on the soul of man, in such a manner as tendeth to the just information of the reader's mind, and the filling up of the wants, and rectifying the errors which may be found in his former conceptions of it. And I do purposely inculcate the same things oft, in several writings (as when I preached I did in all my sermons) that the reader may find that I bring him not undigested, needless novelties, and that the frequent repetition of them may help to make the deeper and fuller impression : for my work is to subserve the Holy Ghost, in putting God's law into men's hearts, and writing it out truly, clearly, and fully upon their inward parts ; that they may be made such themselves, by understanding thoroughly what they must be, and what a solid Christian is : and that thus they may be born again by the incorruptible, immortal seed, the word of God, which will live and abide forever ; and may purify their souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit ; 1 Pet. i. 22, 23, 25. He is the best lawyer, physician, soldier, &c. who hath his doctrine in his brain, and not only in his books, and hath digested his reading into an intellectual system and habit of knowledge. If ministers had a hundred times over repeated the integral portraiture or character of a sound Christian, till it had been as familiar to the minds and memories of their hearers, as is the description of a magistrate, a physician, a schoolmaster, a husbandman, a shepherd, and such things as they are well acquainted with, it would have been a powerful means to make sound Christians. But when men's minds conceive of a Christian, as a man that differeth from heathens and infidels, in nothing but holding the Christian opinions, and using different words and ceremonies of worship, and such like, no wonder if such be but opinionative, lifeless Christians : and if their religion make them no better than a Seneca or Plutarch, I shall never believe that they are any surer to be saved than they. And such a sort of men there are, that suppose Christianity to consist but of these three parts. 1. The Christian doctrine acknowledged (which they call faith.) 2. The orders and ordinances of the Christian church and worship, submitted to, and decently used, (which they call godliness.) And 3.

the heart and life of a Cato, Cicero, or Socrates adjoined ; but all that goeth beyond this, (which is the life of Christianity and godliness, a lively faith, and hope, and love ; a heavenly and holy mind and life, from the renewing, indwelling Spirit of God, which is described in this treatise) they are strangers to it, and take it to be but fancy and hypocrisy. These no Christians do much to reduce the church to infidelity ; that there may be indeed no Christians in the world. For my part I must confess, if there were no better Christians in the world than these, I think I should be no Christian myself : and if Christ made men no better than the religion of Socrates, Cato, or Seneca, and did no more to the reparation and perfecting of men's hearts and lives, I should think no better of the Christian religion than of theirs ; for the means is to be estimated by the end and use : and that is the best physician that hath the remedies which are fittest to work the cure. If God had not acquainted me with a sort of men that have really more holiness, mortification, spirituality, love to God, and to one another, and even to enemies, and more heavenly desires, expectations and delights, than these men before described have, it would have been a very great hindrance to my faith.

The same may I say of those that place godliness and Christianity only in holding strict opinions, and in affected, needless singularities, and in the fluent oratory and length of prayer, and avoiding other men's forms and modes of worship, and in any thing short of a renewed, holy, heavenly heart and life.

And undoubtedly, if a true, full character of godliness had been imprinted in their minds, we should never have seen the professors of it so blotted with sensuality, selfishness, pride, ambition, worldliness, distrust of God, self-conceitedness, heresy, schism, rebellions, unquietness, impatency, unmercifulness, and cruelty to men's souls and bodies, as we have seen them in this age ; and all this justified as consistent with religion.

And I fear, that because this treatise will speak to few that are not some way guilty, every face which hath a spot or blemish will be offended with the glass ; and lest the faulty will say, that I particularly intended to disgrace them : but I must tell the reader, to prevent his misunderstanding, that if he shall imagine that I have my eyes

upon particular parties, and, as a discontented person do intend to blame those that differ from myself, or to grieve inferiors, or dishonour and asperse superiors, they will mistake me, and wrong themselves, and me, who professedly intend but the true description of *sound* Christians, *diseased* Christians, and *seeming* Christians.

And for the manner of this writing, I am conscious it hath but little to commend it. The matter is that for which it is published. The Lord Verulam, in his essays, truly saith, that "much reading makes one full, much discourse doth make one ready, and much writing doth make a man exact." Though I have had my part of all these means, yet being parted five years from my books, and three years from my preaching, the effects may decay; and you must expect neither quotations or oratory testimonies, or ornaments of style: but having not yet wholly ceased from writing, I may own so much of the exactness, as will allow me to entreat the reader, not to use me as many have done, who by overlooking some one word, have made the sense another thing, and have made it a crime to be exact in writing, because they cannot or will not be exact in reading, or charitable or humane in interpreting.

RICHARD BAXTER.

THE CHARACTER
OF A
SOUND, CONFIRMED CHRISTIAN, &c.

IN the explication of the text, which I made the ground of the foregoing discourse,* I have shewed you that there is a degree of grace to be expected and sought after by all true Christians, which putteth the soul into a sound, confirmed, radicated state, in comparison of that weak, diseased, tottering condition, which most Christians now continue in. And I have shewed you how desirable a state that is, and what calamities follow the languishing, unhealthful state, even of such as may be saved. And indeed did we but rightly understand how deeply the errors and sins of many well-meaning Christians have wounded the interest of religion in this age; and how heinously they have dishonored God, and caused the enemies of holiness to blaspheme, and hardened thousands in popery and ungodliness, in probability to their perdition: had we well observed when God's judgments have begun and understood what sins have caused our wars, and plagues, and flames, and worse than all these, our great heart-divisions, and church-distractions and convulsions; we should ere this have given over the flattering of ourselves and one another, in such a heaven-provoking state; and the ostentation of that little goodness, which hath been eclipsed by such lamentable evils. And instead of these, we should have betaken ourselves to the exercise of such a serious, deep repentance as the quality of our sins, and the greatness of God's chastisements do require. It is a doleful case, to see how light many make of all the rest of their distempers, when once they think that they have so much grace and mortification, as is absolutely necessary to save their souls; and expect that preachers should say little to weak Christians, but words of comfort, setting forth their

* This work was originally published in connection with another entitled "Directions to the converted for their establishment."—*Ed.*

happiness. And yet if one of them, when he hath the gout, or stone, or cholic, or dropsy, doth send for a physician, he would think himself derided or abused, if his physician, instead of curing his disease, should only comfort him, by telling him, that he is not dead. What excellent disputations have Cicero and Seneca, the Platonists and Stoics, to prove that virtue is of itself sufficient to make man happy. And yet many Christians live as if holiness were but the way and means to their felicity, or at best but a small part of their felicity itself; or as if felicity itself grew burdensome, or were not desirable in this life; or a small degree of it were as good as a greater.

And too many mistake the will of God, and the nature of sanctification, and place their religion in the hot prosecution of those mistakes. They make a composition of error and passion, and an unyielding stiffness in them, and siding with the church or party which maintaineth them, and an uncharitable censuring those that are against them, and an unpeaceable contending for them; and this composition they mistake for godliness, especially if there be but a few drachms of godliness and truth in the composition, though corrupted and overpowered by the rest.

For these miscarriages of many well-meaning, zealous persons, the land mourneth, the churches groan; kingdoms are disturbed by them; families are disquieted by them; godliness is hindered, and much dishonored by them; the wicked are hardened by them, and encouraged to hate, and blaspheme, and oppose religion; the glory of the Christian faith is obscured by them; and the infidel, Mahometan, and heathen world, are kept from faith in Jesus Christ, and many millions of souls destroyed by them. I mean by the miscarriages of the weaker sort of Christians, and by the wicked lives of those carnal hypocrites, who for custom or worldly interest, do profess that Christianity which was never received by their hearts.

And all this is much promoted by their indiscretion, who are so intent upon the consolatory opening of the safety and happiness of believers, that they omit the due explication of their description, their dangers, and their duties.

One part of this too much neglected work I have endeavored to perform in the foregoing treatise: another I shall attempt in this

second part. There are five degrees or ranks of true Christians observable. 1. The weakest Christians, who have only the essentials of Christianity, or very little more : as infants that are alive, but of little strength or use to others. 2. Those that are lapsed into some wounding sin, though not into a state of damnation ; like men at age, who have lost the use of some one member for the present, though they are strong in other parts. 3. Those that have the integral parts of Christianity in a considerable measure, are in a sound and healthful state, though neither perfect, nor of the highest form or rank of Christians in this life, nor without such infirmities, as are the matter of their daily watchfulness and humiliation. 4. Those that are so strong as to attain extraordinary degrees of grace, who are therefore comparatively called perfect, as Matt. v. 45. 5. Those that have an absolute perfection without sin ; that is, the heavenly inhabitants.

Among all these, it is the third sort or degree which I have here characterised, and upon the bye, the first sort, and the hypocrite. I meddle not now with the lapsed Christian as such, nor with those giants in holiness of extraordinary strength ; nor with the perfect, blessed souls in heaven. But it is the Christian who hath attained that confirmation in grace, and composed, quiet, fruitful state, which we might ordinarily expect, if we were industrious, whose image and character I shall now present you with. I call him oftentimes a Christian indeed, in allusion to Christ's description of Nathaniel (John i. 47.), and as we commonly use that word, for one that answereth his own profession without any notable dishonor or defect ; as we say *such a man is a scholar indeed* ; and not as signifying his mere sincerity. I mean one whose heart and life are so conformed to the principles, the rule, and the hopes of Christianity, that to the honor of Christ, the true nature of our religion is discernible in his conversation ; Matt. v. 16. In whom an impartial infidel might perceive the true nature of the Christian faith and godliness. If the world were fuller of such living images of Christ, who, like true regenerate children, represent their heavenly Father, Christianity would not have met with so much prejudice, nor had so many enemies in the world, nor would so many millions have been kept in the darkness of hea-

thenism and infidelity, by flying from Christians, as a sort of people that are common and unclean.

Among Christians, there are babes, that must be fed with milk, and not with strong meat, that are "unskilful in the word of righteousness;" (1 John ii. 2, 12—14. Heb. v. 12—14.) and novices, who are unsettled, and in danger of an overthrow; 1 Tim. iii. 6. John xv. 3, 5, &c. In these the nature and excellency of Christianity, is little more apparent than reason in a little child. And there are strong, confirmed Christians, who, by "reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil," (Heb. v. 13, 14.) and who shew forth the glory of him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light; of whom God himself may say to Satan and their malicious enemies, as once of Job, "Hast thou not seen my servant Job," &c. This Christian indeed I shall now describe to you, both to confute the infidel's slanders of Christianity, and to unteach men those false descriptions which have caused the presumption of the profane, and the irregularities of erroneous sectaries; and to tell you what manner of persons they be, that God is honored by; and what you must be, if you will understand your own religion. Be Christians indeed, and you will have the comforts indeed of Christianity; and will find that its fruits and joys are not dreams, and shadows, and imaginations, if you content not yourselves with an imagination, dream, and shadow of Christianity, or with some clouded spark, or buried seed.

The Characters.

I. 1. A Christian indeed, (by which I still mean, a sound confirmed Christian,) is one that contenteth not himself to have a seed, or habit of faith, but he liveth by faith, as the sensualist by sight or sense. Not putting out the eye of sense, nor living as if he had no body, or lived not in a world of sensible objects; but as he is a reasonable creature, which exalteth him above the sensitive nature, so faith is the true information of his reason, about those high and excellent things, which must take him up above things sensible. He hath so firm a belief of the life to come, as procured by Christ, and promised in the Gospel, as that it serveth him for the government of

his soul, as his bodily sight doth for the conduct of his body. I say not, that he is assaulted with no temptations, nor that his faith is perfect in degree, nor that believing moveth him as passionately as sight or sense would do : but it doth effectually move him through the course and tenor of his life, to do those things for the life to come, which he would do if he saw the glory of heaven ; and to shun those things, for the avoiding of damnation, which he would shun if he saw the flames of hell. Whether he do these things so fervently or not, his belief is powerful, effectual, and victorious. Let sight and sense invite him to their objects, and entice him to sin and forsake his God ; the objects of faith shall prevail against them, in the bent of an even, a constant, and resolved life. It is things unseen which he taketh for his treasure, and which have his heart and hope, and chiefest labors. All things else which he hath to do, are but subservient to his faith and heavenly interest, as his sensitive faculties are ruled by his reason. His faith is not only his opinion, which teacheth him to choose what church or party he will be of ; but it is his intellectual light, by which he liveth, and in the confidence and comfort of which he dieth. "For we walk by faith, not by sight. We groan to be clothed upon with our heavenly house. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him ;" 2 Cor. v. 7—9. "Now the just shall live by faith ;" Heb. x. 38. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen ;" Heb. xi. 1. Most of the examples in Heb. xi. do shew you this truth, that true Christians live and govern their actions, by the firm belief of the promise of God, and of another life when this is ended. "By faith, Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark, to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith ;" ver. 7. "Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God ;" ver 10. "Moses feared not the wrath of the king ; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible ;" ver. 27. So the three witnesses (Dan. iii.) and Daniel himself, (chap. vi.) and all believers have lived this life, as Abraham the father of the faithful did ; who, as it is said of him, "Staggered not at the promise of God through

unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God ;” Rom. iv. 20. The faith of a Christian is truly divine ; and he knoweth that God’s truth is as certain as sight itself can be ; however sight be apter to move the passions. Therefore, if you can judge but what a rational man would be, if he saw heaven and hell, and all that God had appointed us to believe, then you may conjecture what a confirmed Christian is ; though sense do cause more sensible apprehensions.

2. The weak Christian also, hath a faith that is divine, as caused by God, and resting on his word and truth. And he so far liveth by this faith, as that it commandeth and guideth the scope and drift of his heart and life. But he believeth with a great deal of staggering and unbelief ; and therefore his hopes are interrupted by his troublesome doubts and fears ; and the dimness and languor of his faith is seen in the faintness of his desires, and the many blemishes of his heart and life. And sight and sensual objects are so much the more powerful with him, by how much the light and life of faith is dark and weak.

3. The hypocrite, or best of the unregenerate, believeth, but either with a human faith, which resteth but on the word of man, or else with a dead, opinionative faith, which is overpowered by infidelity, or is like the dreaming thoughts of man asleep, which stir him not to action. He liveth by sight, and not by faith ; for he hath not a faith that will overpower sense and sensual objects ; James ii. 14. Matt. xiii. 22.

II, 1. A Christian indeed not only knoweth why he is a Christian, but seeth those reasons for his religion, which disgrace all that the most cunning atheist or infidel can say against it ; and so far satisfy, confirm, and establish him, that emergent difficulties, temptations, and objections, do not at all stagger him, or raise any deliberate doubts in him of the truth of the word of God. He seeth, first the natural evidence of those foundation-truths which nature itself maketh known ; as that there is a God of infinite being, power, wisdom, and goodness, the Creator, the Owner, the Ruler, and the Father, felicity and end of man ; that we owe him all our love and service ; that none of our fidelity shall be in vain, or unrewarded, and none shall be finally a loser by his duty ; that man who is natu-

rally governed by the hopes and fears of another life, is made and liveth for that other life, where his soul shall be sentenced by God his Judge, to happiness or misery, &c. And then he discerneth the attestation of God to those supernatural, superadded revelations of the Gospel, containing the doctrine of man's redemption. And he seeth how wonderfully these are built upon the former, and how excellently the Creator's and Redeemer's doctrine and laws agree; and how much countenance supernatural truths receive from the presupposed naturals; so that he doth not adhere to Christ and religion by the mere engagement of education, friends or worldly advantages; ~~not~~ by a blind resolution, which wanteth nothing but a strong temptation, (from a deceiver or a worldly interest,) to shake or overthrow it. But he is built upon the rock, which will stand in the assault of satan's storms, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; Matt. xvi. 18. xiii. 23. vii. 25. John vi. 68, 69.

2. But a weak Christian hath but a dim and general kind of knowledge of the reasons of his religion; or, at least, but a weak apprehension of them, though he have the best, and most unanswerable reasons. And either he is confident in the dark upon grounds which he cannot make good, and which want but a strong assault to shake them; or else he is troubled and ready to stagger at every difficulty which occurreth. Every hard saying in the scripture doth offend him; and every seeming contradiction shaketh him. And the depth of mysteries, which pass his understanding, do make him say as Nicodemus of regeneration, "How can these things be?" And if he meet with the objections of a cunning infidel, he is unable so to defend the truth, and clear his way through them, as to come off unwounded and unshaken, and to be the more confirmed in the truth of his belief, by discerning the vanity of all that is said against it; Heb. v. 12, 13. Matt. xv. 16. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. John xii. 16.

3. The seeming Christian either hath no solid reasons at all for his religion, or else if he have the best, he hath no sound apprehension of them; but though he be never so learned and orthodox, and can preach and defend the faith, it is not so rooted in him as to endure the trial; but if a strong temptation from subtlety or carnal interest assault him, you shall see that he was built upon the sand,

and that there was in him a secret root of bitterness, and an evil heart of unbelief, which causeth him to depart from the living God. Heb. iii. 12. Matt. xiii. 20—22. vii. 26, 27. Heb. xii. 15. John vi. 60. 64. 66. 1 Tim. vi. 10, 11.

III. 1. A Christian indeed, is not only confirmed in the essentials of Christianity, but he hath a clear, delightful sight of those useful truths, which are the integrals of Christianity, and are built upon the fundamentals, and are the branches of the master points of faith. Though he see not all the lesser truths, (which are branched out at last into innumerable particles,) yet he seeth the main body of sacred verities, delivered by Christ for man's sanctification, and seeth them methodically in their proper places; and seeth how one supports another, and in how beautiful an order and contexture they are placed. And as he sticketh not in the bare principles, so he receiveth all these additions of knowledge, not notionally only, but practically, as the food on which his soul must live; Heb. v. 13, 14. vi. 1, 2. &c. Matt. xiii. 11. Eph. i. 18. iii. 18, 19. John xiii. 17.

2. A weak Christian, (in knowledge,) besides the principles or essentials of religion, doth know but a few disordered, scattered truths; which are also but half known, because while he hath some knowledge of those points, he is ignorant of many others, which are needful to the supporting, and clearing, and improving of them; and because he knoweth them not in their places, and order, and relation and aspect upon other truths. And, therefore, if temptations be strong, and come with advantage, the weak Christian, in such points, is easily drawn into many errors; and thence into great confidence and conceitedness in those errors; and thence into sinful, dangerous courses in the prosecution and practice of those errors. Such are like "children tossed up and down, and carried to and fro by every wind of doctrine, through the cunning sleight and subtlety of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Eph. iv. 14. 2 Cor. xi. 3. Col. ii. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 7.

3. The seeming Christian having no saving, practical knowledge of the essentials of Christianity themselves, doth therefore, either neglect to know the rest, or knoweth them but notionally, as common sciences, and subjecteth them all to his worldly interest; and there-

fore, is still of that side or party in religion, which, upon the account of safety, honor, or preferment, his flesh commandeth him to follow. Either he is still on the greater, rising side, and of the rulers' religion, be it what it will; or if he dissent, it is in pursuit of another game, which pride or fleshly ends have started. 2 Pet. ii. 14. Gal. iii. 3. John ix. 22. xii. 42, 43. Matt. xiii. 21, 22.

IV. 1. The Christian indeed, hath not only reason for his religion, but also hath an inward, continual principle, even the Spirit of Christ, which is as a new nature, inclining and enlivening him to a holy life; whereby he mindeth and savoureth the things of the Spirit. Not that his nature doth work blindly, as nature doth in the irrational creatures; but at least it much imitateth nature as it is found in rational creatures, where the inclination is necessary, but the operations free, and subject to reason. It is a spiritual appetite in the rational appetite, even the will, and a spiritual, visive disposition in the understanding. Not a faculty in a faculty; but the right disposition of the faculties to their highest objects, to which they are by corruption made unsuitable. So that it is neither a proper power in the natural sense, nor a mere act, but nearest to the nature of a seminal disposition or habit. It is the health and rectitude of the faculties of the soul. Even as nature hath made the understanding disposed to truth in general, and the will disposed or inclined to good in general, and to self-preservation and felicity in particular; so the Spirit of Christ doth dispose the understanding to spiritual truth, to know God and the matters of salvation, and doth incline the will to God and holiness, not blindly, as they are unknown, but to love and serve a known God. So that whether this be properly or only analogically called a nature, or rather should be called a habit, I determine not; but certainly it is a fixed disposition and inclination, which Scripture calleth the "Divine nature," (2 Pet. i. 4.) and "the seed of God abiding in us;" 1 John iii. 9. But most usually it is called the Spirit of God, or of Christ in us. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his;" Rom. viii. 9. "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body;" 1 Cor. xii. 13. Therefore, we are said "to be in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit, and by the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body;" Rom. viii. 1. 9. 13.

And it is called, "the Spirit of the Son, and the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;" or are inclined to God, as children to their father; and the "Spirit of grace and supplication;" Rom. viii. 15. 23. 26. Gal. iv. 6. v. 17. 18. Eph. ii. 18. 22. iv. 3. 4. Phil. i. 27. ii. 1. Zech. xii. 10. From this Spirit, and the fruits of it, we are called new creatures, and quickened, and made alive to God; 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. ii. 15. Rom. vi. 11. 13. It is a great controversy, whether this holy disposition and inclination was natural to Adam or not, and consequently, whether it be a restored nature in us, or not. It was so natural to him as health is natural to the body, but not so natural as to be a necessitating principle, nor so as to be inseparable and unlosable.

2. This same Spirit and holy inclination is in the weakest Christian also, but in a small degree, and remissly operating, so as that the fleshly inclination oft seemeth to be the stronger, when he judgeth by its passionate strugglings within him. Though, indeed, the Spirit of life doth not only strive, but conquer in the main, even in the weakest Christians; Rom. viii. 9. Gal. v. 17—21.

3. The seeming Christian hath only the ineffectual motions of the Spirit to a holy life, and effectual motions and inward dispositions to some common duties of religion. And from these, with the natural principles of self-love and common honesty, with the outward persuasions of company and advantages, his religion is maintained, without the regeneration of the Spirit; John iii. 6.

V. From hence it followeth, 1. That a Christian indeed doth not serve God for fear only, but for love; even for love both of himself, and of his holy work and service. Yea, the strong Christian's love to God and holiness, is not only greater than his love to creatures, but greater than his fear of wrath and punishment. The love of God constraineth him to duty; 2 Cor. v. 14. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," (Rom. xiii. 10.) therefore, the Gospel cannot be obeyed without it. He saith not, 'O that this were no duty, and O that this forbidden thing were lawful;' though his flesh say so, the Spirit, which is the predominant part, doth not. But he saith, "O how I love thy law! O that my ways were so directed that I might keep thy statutes!" Psal. cxix. 5. For the Spirit is willing

even when the flesh is weak. He serveth not God against his will ; but his will is to serve him more, and better than he doth. He longeth to be perfect, and perfectly to do the will of God, and taketh the remnant of his sinful infirmities to be a kind of bondage to him, which he groaneth to be delivered from. To will even perfection is present with him, though not perfectly ; and though he do not all that he willeth. And this is the true meaning of Paul's complaints ; Rom. vii. Because the flesh warreth against the Spirit, he cannot do the good that he would ; that is, he cannot be perfect, for so he would be ; Gal. v. 17. His love and will excel his practice.

2. The weak Christian also hath more love to God and holiness than to the world and fleshly pleasure. But yet his fear of punishment is greater than his love to God and holiness. To have no love to God, is inconsistent with a state of grace, and so it is to have less love to God than to the world, and less love to holiness than to sin. But to have more fear than love is consistent with sincerity of grace. Yea, the weak Christian's love to God and holiness is joined with so much backwardness and averseness, and interrupted with weariness, and with the carnal allurements and diversions of the creature, that he cannot certainly perceive whether his love and willingness be sincere or not. He goeth on in a course of duty, but so heavily, that he scarce knoweth whether his love or loathing of it be the greater. He goeth to it as a sick man to his meat, or labor. All that he doth is with so much pain or indisposedness, that to his feeling, his averseness seemeth greater than his willingness, were it not that necessity maketh him willing. For the habitual love and complacency which he hath towards God and duty, is so oppressed by fear, and by averseness, that it is not so much felt in act as they.

3. A seeming Christian hath no true love of God and holiness at all, but some ineffectual liking and wishes which are overborne by a greater backwardness, and by a greater love to earthly things ; so that fear alone, without any true, effectual love, is the spring and principle of his religion and obedience. God hath not his heart, when he draweth near him with his lips ; he doth more than he would do, if he were not forced by necessity and fear ; and had rather be excused, and lead another kind of life ; Matt. xv. 8. Isa.

xxix. 13. Though necessity and fear are very helpful to the most sincere, yet fear alone, without love or willingness is a graceless state.

VI. 1. A Christian indeed doth love God in these three gradations: he loveth him much for his mercy to himself, and for that goodness which consisteth in benignity to himself; but he loveth him more for his mercy to the church, and for that goodness which consisteth in his benignity to the church. But he loveth him most of all for his infinite perfections and essential excellencies; his infinite power, and wisdom, and goodness, simply in himself considered. For he knoweth that love to himself obligeth him to returns of love; especially differencing, saving grace: and he knoweth that the souls of millions are more worth incomparably than his own, and that God may be much more honored by them, than by him alone; and therefore he knoweth that the mercy to many is greater mercy, and a greater demonstration of the goodness of God, and therefore doth render him more amiable to man; Rom. ix. 3. And yet he knoweth that essential perfection and goodness of God, as simply in himself and for himself, is much more amiable than his benignity to the creature; and that he that is the first efficient, must needs be the ultimate, final cause of all things; and that God is not finally for the creature, but the creature for God, (for all that he needeth it not) "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things;" Rom. xi. 36. And as he is infinitely better than ourselves, so he is to be better loved than ourselves. As I love a wise and virtuous person, though he be one I never expect to receive any thing from, and therefore love him for his own sake, and not for his benignity or usefulness to me: so must I love God most for his essential perfections, though his benignity also doth represent him amiable. As he is blindly selfish that would not rather himself be annihilated or perish, than whole kingdoms should all perish, or the sun be taken out of the world; (because that which is best must be loved as best, and therefore be best loved:) so is he more blind, who in his estimative, complacential love, preferreth not infinite, eternal goodness, before such an imperfect, silly creature as himself (or all the world). We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves, when God is to be

loved with all the heart, and soul, and might, which therefore signifieth more than to love him as ourselves ; (or else he were to be loved no more than our neighbor). So that the strong Christian loveth God so much above himself, as that he accounteth himself and all his interests, as nothing in comparison of God, yea, and loveth himself more for God than for himself : though his own salvation be loved and desired by him, and God must be loved for his mercy and benignity ; yet that salvation itself which he desireth, is nothing else but the love of God : wherein his love is the final, felicitating act, and God is the final, felicitating object, and the felicity of loving is not first desired ; but the attractive object doth draw out our love, and thereby make us consequentially happy in the enjoying exercise thereof. Thus God is all and in all to the soul ; Psal. lxxiii. 25. Rom. xi. 36. 1 Cor. x. 31. Deut. vi. 5. Matt. xxiii. 37. xix. 17.

2. A weak Christian also loveth God as one that is infinitely better than himself and all things ; (or else he did not love him at all as God). But in the exercise he is so much in the minding of himself, and so seldom and weak in the contemplation of God's perfections, that he feeleth more of his love to himself, than unto God ; and feeleth more of his love to God, as for the benefits which he receiveth in and by himself, than as for his own perfections ; yea, and often feeleth the love of himself to work more strongly than his love to the church, and all else in the world. The care of his own salvation is the highest principle which he ordinarily perceiveth in any great strength in him ; and he is very little and weakly carried out to the love of the whole church, and to the love of God above himself ; Phil. ii. 20—22. 1 Cor. x. 24. Jer. xlv. 5.

3. A seeming Christian hath a common love of God as he is good, both in himself, and unto the world, and unto him. But this is not for his holiness ; and it is but a general, ineffectual approbation and praise of God, which followeth a dead, ineffectual unbelief : but his chief, predominant love is always to his carnal self, and the love both of his soul, and of God, is subjected to his fleshy self-love. His chief love to God is for prospering him in the world, and such as is subservient to his sensuality, pride, covetousness, presumption and false hopes ; Luke xviii. 21, 22. 1 John ii. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 2, 4. John. xii. 43. v. 42.

VII. 1. A Christian indeed doth practically take this love of God, and the holy expressions of it, to be the very life and top of his religion, and the very life, and beauty, and pleasure of his soul: he makes it his work in the world, and loveth himself (complacently) but so far as he findeth in himself the love of God; and so far as he findeth himself without it, he loatheth himself as an unlovely carcase: and so far as his prayers and obedience are without it, he looks on them but as unacceptable, loathsome things; and therefore he is taken up in the study of redemption, because he can nowhere so clearly see the love and loveliness of God, as in the face of a Redeemer, even in the wonders of love revealed in Christ. And he studieth them, that love may kindle love; and therefore he delighteth in the contemplating of God's attributes and infinite perfections; and in the beholding of him in the frame of the creation, and reading his name in the book of his works, that his soul may by such steps, be raised in love and admiration of his Maker. And as it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun or light, so it is to the mind of the Christian indeed, to be frequently and seriously contemplating the nature and glory of God: and the exercise of love in such contemplations is most of his daily walk with God. And therefore it is also, that he is more taken up in the exercises of thanksgiving, and the praises of the Almighty, than in the lower parts of godliness; so that though he neglect not confession of sin and humiliation, yet doth he use them but in subserviency to the love and praise of God: he doth but rid out the filth that is undecent in a heart that is to entertain its God. He placeth not the chief part of his religion in any outward duties, nor in any lower, preparatory acts; nor doth he stop in any of these, however he neglect them not. But he useth them all to advance his soul in the love of God; and useth them the more diligently, because the love of God, to which they conduce, as to their proper end, is so high and excellent a work. Therefore in David's psalms you find a heart delighting itself in the praises of God, and in love with his word and works, in order to his praises; Psal. cxvi. 1. &c. cvi. ciii. cxlv. cxlvi. &c. Rom. viii. 37.

2. The weak Christian is taken up but very little with the lively exercises of love and praise, nor with any studies higher than his own

distempered heart : the care of his poor soul, and the complaining of his manifold infirmities and corruptions, is the most of his religion : and if he set himself to the praising of God, or to thanksgiving, he is as dull and short in it as if it were not his proper work ; Psal. lxxvii. Mark ix. 24. xvi. 14.

3. The seeming Christian liveth to the flesh ; and carnal self-love is the active principle of his life ; and he is neither exercised in humiliation or in praise sincerely, being unacquainted both with holy joy and sorrow : but knowing that he is in the hands of God, to prosper or destroy him, he will humble himself to him to escape his judgments, and praise him with some gladness for the sunshine of prosperity ; and he will seem to be piously thanking God, when he is but rejoicing in the accommodations of his flesh, or strengthening his presumption and false hopes of heaven ; Luke xviii. 11. xii. 19. Isaiah lviii. 2.

VII. 1. A Christian indeed is one that is so apprehensive of his lost condition, unworthiness, and utter insufficiency for himself, and of the office, perfection, and sufficiency of Christ, that he hath absolutely put his soul, and all his hopes into the hands of Christ, and now liveth in him and upon him ; as having no life but what he hath from Christ, nor any other way of access to God, or acceptance of his person, or his service, but by him. In him he beholdeth and delightfully admireth the love and goodness of the Father ; in him he hath access with boldness unto God ; through him the most terrible, avenging judge is become a reconciled God, and he that we could not remember but with trembling, is become the most desirable object of our thoughts. He is delightfully employed in prying into the unsearchable mystery : and Christ doth even dwell in his heart by faith ; “ and being rooted and grounded in love, he apprehendeth with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and knoweth the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge ;” Ephes. iii. 17—19. He perceiveth that he is daily beholden to Christ that he is not in hell, that sin doth not make him like to devils, and that he is not utterly forsaken of God : he feeleth that he is beholden to Christ for every hour’s time, and every mercy to his soul or body, and for all his hope of mercy in this life, or in the life to come. He perceiveth that he is dead in himself, and that his “ life is

hid with Christ in God." And therefore he is as "buried and risen again with Christ;" even "dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ;" Rom. vi. 3, 4. 11. Col. iv. 4. He saith with Paul, Gal. ii. 20. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Thus doth he live as truly and constantly by the second Adam, who is a quickening spirit, as he doth by the first Adam, who was a living soul; 1 Cor. xv. 45. This is a confirmed Christian's life.

2. But the weak Christian, though he be also united unto Christ, and live by faith, yet how languid are the operations of that faith? How dark and dull are his thoughts of Christ? How little is his sense of the wonders of God's love revealed to the world, in the mystery of redemption? How little use doth he make of Christ? And how little life receives he from him? And how little comfort findeth he in believing, in comparison of that which the confirmed find? He is to Christ as a sick person to his food: he only picketh here and there a little of the crumbs of the bread of life, to keep him from dying; but is woefully unacquainted with the most powerful works of faith. He is such a believer as is next to an unbeliever, and such a member of Christ, as is next to a mere stranger.

3. And for the seeming Christian, he may understand the letter of the Gospel, and number himself with Christ's disciples, and be baptized with water, and have such a faith as is a dead opinion; but he hath not an effectual, living faith, nor is baptized with the Holy Ghost; nor is his soul engaged absolutely and entirely in the covenant of Christianity to his Redeemer: he may have a handsome, well-made image of Christianity, but it is the flesh and sense, and not Christ and faith, by which his life is actuated and ordered; John iii. 6. Rom. ii. 28.

IX. 1. A Christian indeed doth firmly believe that Christ is a "Teacher sent from God," (John iii. 2.) and that he came from heaven to reveal his Father's will, and to bring "life and immortality" more fully "to light by his Gospel;" and that if an angel had been sent to tell us of the life to come, and the way thereto, he had

not been so credible and venerable a messenger as the Son of God ; and therefore he taketh him alone for his chief Teacher, and knoweth no master on earth but him, and such as he appointeth under him : his study in the world is to know a crucified and glorified Christ, and God by him, and he regardeth no other knowledge, nor useth any other studies but this, and such as are subservient to this. Even when he studieth the works of nature, it is as by the conduct of the Restorer of nature, and as one help appointed him by Christ, to lead up to the knowledge of God. And therefore he perceiveth that Christ is made of God unto us, wisdom as well as righteousness : and that Christianity is the true philosophy ; and that the wisdom of the world, which is only about worldly things, from worldly principles, to a worldly end, is foolishness with God : he taketh nothing for wisdom which tendeth not to acquaint him more with God, or lead him up to everlasting happiness. Christ is his Teacher, (either by natural or supernatural revelation) and God is his ultimate end in all his studies, and all that he desireth to know in the world. He valueth knowledge according to its usefulness : and he knoweth that its chief use is to lead us to the love of God ; Matt. xxiii. 8. 1 Cor. i. 30. ii. 2, &c. John. i. 18. Col. ii. 3. Ephes. iv. 13.

2. Though the weak Christian hath the same Master, yet alas, how little doth he learn ! And how oft is he hearkening to the teaching of the flesh ! And how carnal, and common is much of his knowledge ! How little doth he depend on Christ, in his inquiries after the things of nature ! And how apt is he to think almost as highly of the teaching of Aristotle, Plato, Seneca, or at least of some excellent preacher, as of Christ's ! And to forget that these are but his messengers and instruments, to convey unto us several parcels of that truth, which is his, and not theirs, and which (naturally or supernaturally) they received from him ; and all these candles were lighted by him, who is the sun ! And how little doth this weak Christian refer his common knowledge to God ; or use it for him ; or to the furtherance of his own and others happiness ! 1 Tim. ii. 4.

3. And the seeming Christian, though materially he may be eminent for knowledge, yet is so far from resigning himself to the teachings of Christ, that he maketh even his knowledge of Christian ver-

ities to be to him but a common carnal thing, while he knoweth it but in a common manner, and useth it to the service of the flesh, and never yet learned so much as to be a new creature, nor to love God as God above the world ; 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

X. 1. A Christian indeed is one whose repentance hath been deep, and serious, and universal, and unchangeable : it hath gone to the very roots of sin, and to the bottom of the sore, and hath not left behind it any reigning, unmortified sin, nor any prevalent love to fleshly pleasures. His repentance did not only disgrace his sin, and cast some reproachful words against it, and use confessions to excuse him from mortification, and to save its life, and hide it from the mortal blow ; nor doth he only repent of his open sins, and those that are most censured by the beholders of his life ; but he specially perceives the dangerous poison of pride, and unbelief, and worldliness, and the want of the love of God ; and all his outward and smaller sins, do serve to shew him the greater malignity of these, and these are the matter of his greatest lamentations. He taketh not up a profession of religion with strong corruptions, secretly covered in his heart ; but his religion consisteth in the death of his corruptions, and the purifying of his heart ; he doth not secretly cherish any sin as too sweet or too profitable to be utterly forsaken, nor overlook it as a small, inconsiderable matter. But he feeleth sin to be his enemy and his disease, and as he desireth not one enemy, one sickness, one wound, one broken bone, one serpent in his bed, so he desireth not any one sin to be spared in his soul ; but saith with David ; “ Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me : and lead me in the way everlasting ;” Psal. cxxxix. 23. He liveth in no gross and scandalous sin : and his infirmities are comparatively few and small ; so that if he were not a sharper accuser of himself, than the most observant spectators are (that are just) there would little be known by him that is culpable and matter of reproof. He “ walketh in all the commandments and ordinances of God blameless ;” (as to any notable miscarriage,) Luke i. 6. He is “ blameless and harmless, as the son of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation ; among whom he shineth as a light in the world ;”

Phil. ii. 15. The fear, and love, and obedience of God, is the work and tenor of his life.

2. But the weak Christian, though he hath no sin but what he is a hater of, and fain would be delivered from, yet, alas ! how imperfect is his deliverance ! And how weak is the hatred of his sin, and mixed with so much proneness to it, that his life is much blemished with the spots of his offences. Though his unbelief, and pride, and worldliness are not predominant in him, yet are they (or some of them) still so strong, and fight so much against his faith, humility, and heavenliness, that he can scarcely tell which hath the upper hand ; nor can others that see the failings of his life, discern whether the good or the evil be most prevalent. Though it be heaven which he most seeketh, yet earth is so much regarded by him, that his heavenymindedness is greatly damped and suppressed by it. And though it be the way of godliness and obedience which he walketh in, yet is it with so many stumblings and falls, if not deviations also, that maketh him oft a burden to himself, a shame to his profession, and a snare or trouble to those about him. His heart is like an ill-swept house, that hath many a sluttish corner in it. And his life is like a moth-eaten garment, which hath many a hole, which you may see if you bring it into the light ; 1 Cor. iii. 1—3. vi. 6—8. xi. 18. 21, 22, &c.

3. And for the seeming Christian, his repentance doth but crop the branches, it goeth not to the root and heart of his sin : it leaveth his fleshly mind and interest in the dominion : it polisheth his life, but maketh him not a new creature : it casteth away those sins which the flesh can spare, and which bring more shame, or loss, or trouble with them, than worldly honor, gain or pleasure ; but still he is a very worldling at the heart ; and the sins which his fleshly pleasures and felicity consist in, he will hide by confessions and seeming oppositions, but never mortify and forsake. As Judas, that while he followed Christ was yet a thief, and a covetous hypocrite ; John xii. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 10, 11.

XI. 1. Hence it followeth that a Christian indeed doth heartily love the searching light, that it may fully acquaint him with his sins : he is truly desirous to know the worst of himself ; and therefore

useth the word of God as a candle, to shew him what is in his heart ; and bringeth himself willingly into the light : he loveth the most searching books and preachers ; not only because they disclose the faults of other men, but his own ; he is not one that so loveth his pleasant and profitable sins, as to fly the light, lest he should be forced to know them, and so to forsake them ; but because he hateth them, and is resolved to forsake them, therefore he would know them ; John iii. 19—21. Therefore he is not only patient under reproofs, but loveth them, and is thankful to a charitable reprove, and maketh a good use even of malicious and passionate reproofs: Psal. cxli. 5. 2 Sam. xvi. 11. He saith, as in Job xxxiv. 32. "That which I see not, teach thou me. If I have done iniquity, I will do no more." His hatred of the sin, and desire to be reformed, suffer not his heart by pride to rise up against the remedy, and reject reproof. Though he will not falsely confess his duty to be his sin, nor take the judgment of every selfish, passionate or ignorant reprove to be infallible, nor to be his rule ; yet if a judicious, impartial person do but suspect him of a fault, he is ready to suspect himself of it, unless he be certain that he is clear. He loveth him better that would save him from his sin, than him that would entice him to it ; and taketh him for his best friend who dealeth freely with him, and is the greatest enemy to his faults : and a flatterer he taketh but for the most dangerous, insinuating kind of foe.

2. But the weak Christian, though he hate his sin, and love reformation, and loveth the most searching books and preachers, and loveth a gentle kind of reproof, yet hath so much pride and selfishness remaining, that any reproof that seemeth disgraceful to him, goeth very hardly down with him ; like a bitter medicine to a queasy stomach : if you reprove him before others, or if your reproof be not very carefully sugared and minced, so that it rather extenuate than aggravate his fault, he will be ready to cast it up into your face, and with retort to tell you of some faults of your own, or some way shew you how little he loveth it, and how little thanks he giveth you for it. If you will not let him alone with his infirmities, he will distaste you, if not fall out with you, and let you know, by his smart and impatience, that you have touched him in the sore and

galled place. He must be a man of very great skill in managing a reproof, that he shall not somewhat provoke him to distaste.

3. And for the seeming Christian, this is "his condemnation, that light is come into the world, and he loveth darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil." He cometh not to the light, lest his deeds should be discovered and reprov'd; John iii. 19—21. He liketh a searching preacher for others, and loveth to hear their sins laid open, if it no way reflecteth upon himself. But for himself he liketh best a general or a smoothing preacher; and he flieth from a quick and searching ministry, lest he should be proved and convinced to be in a state of sin and misery. Guilt maketh him fear or hate a lively, searching preacher, even as the guilty prisoner hateth the judge. He loveth no company so well as that which thinketh highly of him, and applaudeth and commendeth him, and neither by their reproofs or stricter lives, will trouble his conscience with the remembrance of his sin, or the knowledge of his misery. He will take you for his enemy for telling him the truth, if you go about to convince him of his undone condition, and tell him of his beloved sin. Sin is taken to be as himself; it is he that doth evil, and not only sin that dwelleth in him; and therefore all that you say against his sin, he taketh as spoken against himself; and he will defend his sin as he would defend himself; he will hear you till you come to touch himself, as the Jews did by Stephen, Acts vii. 51. 54. when they heard him call them, stiff-necked resisters of God, and persecutors, then they were cut to the heart, and did grind their teeth at him. And as they did by Paul, Acts xxii. 22. "They gave audience to this word, and then lift up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live;" Gal. iv. 16. John ix. 40. Matt. xxi. 45. The priests and Pharisees would have laid hands on Christ, when they perceived that he spake of them. And Ahab hated Micaiah, because he did not prophesy good of him but evil; 1 Kings xxii. 8. Deservedly do they perish in their sin and misery, that hate him that would deliver them, and refuse the remedy. "Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge, but he that hateth reproof is brutish;" Prov. xii. 1. "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy;" Prov. xxix. 1.

XII. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that unfeignedly desireth to attain to the highest degree of holiness, and to be perfectly freed from every thing that is sin. He desireth perfection, though not with a perfect desire. He sitteth not down contentedly in any low degree of grace. He looketh on the holiest (how poor soever) with much more reverence and esteem than on the most rich and honorable in the world; and he had far rather be one of the most holy, than one of the most prosperous and great; he had rather be a Paul or Timothy, than a Cæsar or an Alexander. He complaineth of nothing with so much sorrow, as that he can know and love his God no more! How happy an exchange would he count it, if he had more of the knowledge and love of God, though he lost all his wealth and honor in the world! His smallest sins are a greater burden to him, than his greatest corporal wants and sufferings: as Paul, who because he could not perfectly fulfil God's law, and be as good as he would, he crieth out as in bondage, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. vii. 24.

2. And for the weak Christian, though he is habitually and resolutely of the same mind, yet, alas! his desires after perfection are much more languid in him; and he hath too much patience and reconciledness to some of his sins, and sometimes taketh them to be sweet; so that his enmity to his pride, or covetousness, or passion, is much abated, and suffereth his sin to waste his grace, and wound his conscience, and hinder much of his communion with God. He seeth not the odiousness of sin, nor the beauty of holiness, with so clear a sight as the confirmed Christian doth: he hateth sin more for the ill effects of it, than for its malignant, hateful nature: he seeth not clearly the intrinsic evil that is in sin, which maketh it deserve the pains of hell: nor doth he discern the difference between a holy and unholy soul, so clearly as the stronger christian doth; 1 Cor. iii. 2, 3. Heb. xii. 1.

3. And as for the seeming Christian, though he may approve of perfect holiness in another, and may wish for it himself, when he thinketh of it but in the general, and not as it is exclusive and destructive of his beloved sin; yet when it cometh to particulars, he cannot away with it; he is so far from desiring it, that he will not

endure it. The name of holiness he liketh; and that preservation from hell which is the consequent of it; but when he understandeth what it is, he hath no mind of it. That holiness which should cure his ambition and pride, and make him contented with a low condition, he doth not like: he loveth not that holiness, which would deprive him of his covetousness, his intemperance in pleasant meats and drinks, his fleshly lusts, and inordinate pleasures. Nor doth he desire that holiness should employ his soul in the love of God, and in daily prayer, and meditating on his word, and raise him to a heavenly life on earth.

XIII. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that maketh God and heaven the end, reward and motive of his life; and liveth not in the world for any thing in the world, but for that endless happiness which the next world only can afford. The reasons which actuate his thoughts, and choice, and all his life, are fetched from heaven. The interest of God and his soul as to eternity, is the ruling interest in him. As a traveler goeth all the way, and beareth all the difficulties of it, for the sake of the end or place that he is going to, (however he may talk of many other matters by the way;) so is it with a Christian; he knoweth nothing worthy of his life and labors, but that which he hopeth for hereafter. This world is too sinful, and too vile and short to be his felicity. His very trade and work in the world is to lay up a treasure in heaven, (Matt. vi. 20.) "and to lay up a good foundation against the time to come, and to lay hold on eternal life;" (1 Tim. vi. 19.) and therefore his very heart is there, (Matt. vi. 21.) and he is employed in seeking and setting his affections on the things above: (Col. iii. 1—3.) and his conversation and traffic are in heaven; (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) "he looketh not at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal:" (2 Cor. iv. 18.) he is a stranger upon earth, and heaven is to him as his home.

2. The weak Christian also hath the same end, and hope, and motive; and preferreth his hopes of the life to come, before all the wealth and pleasures of this life: but yet his thoughts of heaven are much more strange and dull; he hath so much doubting and fear yet mixed with his faith and hope, that he looketh before him to his

everlasting state, with backwardness and trouble, and with small desire and delight. He hath so much hope of heaven, as to abate his fears of hell, and make him think of eternity with more quietness than he could do, if he found himself unregenerate; but not so much as to make his thoughts of heaven so free, and sweet, and frequent, nor his desires after it so strong, as the confirmed Christian's are: and therefore his duties, and his speech of heaven, and his endeavors to obtain it, are all more languid and unconstant; and he is much more prone to fall in love with earth, and to entertain the motions of reconciliation to the world, and to have his heart too much set upon some place, or person, or thing below, and to be either delighted too much in the possession of it, or afflicted and troubled too much with the loss of it: earthly things are too much the motives of his life, and the reasons of his joys and griefs: though he hath the true belief of a life to come, and it prevaleth in the main against the world, yet it is but little that he useth to the commanding, and raising, and comforting his soul, in comparison of what a strong believer doth; Matt. xvi. 22, 23.

3. But the seeming Christian would serve God and mammon, and placeth his chief and most certain happiness practically on earth. Though speculatively he know and say that heaven is better, yet doth he not practically judge it to be so to him; and therefore he loveth the world above it, and he doth most carefully lay up a treasure on earth; (Matt. vi. 19.) and is resolved first to seek and secure his portion here below; and yet he taketh heaven for a reserve, as knowing that the world will cast him off at last, and die he must, there is no remedy; and therefore he taketh heaven as next unto the best, as his second hope, as better than hell, and will go in religion as far as he can, without the loss of his prosperity here; so that earth and flesh do govern and command the design and tenor of his life; but heaven and his soul shall have all that they can spare; which may be enough to make him pass with men for one eminently religious; 1 John ii. 15. Matt. xiii. 22. Luke xviii. 22, 23.—xiv. 24, 33. Psal. xvii. 14. Phil. iii. 18—20.

XIV. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that having taken heaven for his felicity, doth account no labor or cost too great for the obtaining

of it. He hath nothing so dear to him in this world, which he cannot spare and part with for God and the world to come. He doth not only notionally know that nothing should seem too dear or hard for the securing of our salvation; but he knoweth this practically, and is resolved accordingly. Though difficulties may hinder him in particular acts, and his executions come not up to the height of his desires (Rom. vii. 16, 17, &c.), yet he is resolved that he will never break terms with Christ. There is no duty so hard which he is not willing and resolved to perform; and no sin so sweet or gainful which he is not willing to forsake: he knoweth how unprofitable a bargain he makes, who winneth the world, and looseth his own soul; and that no gain can ransom his soul, or recompense him for the loss of his salvation; Mark viii. 36. He knoweth that it is impossible to be a loser by God, or to purchase heaven at too dear a rate; he knoweth that whatsoever it cost him, heaven will fully pay for all; and that it is the worldling's labor, and not the saint's, that is repented of at last. He marveleth more at distracted sinners, for making such a stir for wealth, and honors, and command, than they marvel at him for making so much ado for heaven. He knoweth that this world may be too dearly bought, but so cannot his salvation; yea, he knoweth that even our duty itself, is not our smallest privilege and mercy; and that the more we do for God, the more we receive, and the greater is our gain and honor; and that the sufferings of believers for righteousness sake, do not only prognosticate their joys in heaven, but occasion here the greatest joys that any short of heaven partake of; Matt. v. 11, 12. Rom. v. 1—3, &c. He is not one that desireth the end without the means, and would be saved, so it may be on cheap and easy terms; but he absolutely yieldeth to the terms of Christ, and saith with Austin, 'Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis;' 'Cause me to do what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.' Though Pelagius contradicted the first sentence, and the flesh the second, yet Augustine owned both, and so doth every true believer: he greatly complaineth of his backwardness to obey, but never complaineth of the strictness of the command. He loveth the holiness, justness and goodness of the laws, when he bewaileth the unholiness and badness of his heart: he desireth not God to com-

mand him less, but desireth grace and ability to do more. He is so far from the mind of the ungodly world, who cry out against too much holiness, and making so much ado for heaven, that he desireth even to reach to the degree of angels, and would fain have "God's will to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven;" and therefore the more desireth to be in heaven, that he may do it better; Psal. cxix. 5. Rom. vii. 24.

2. The weak Christian hath the same estimation and resolution: but when it comes to practice, as his will is less confirmed, and more corrupted and divided, so little impediments and difficulties are great temptations to him, and stop him more in the way of his obedience. All his duty is much more tedious to him, and all his sufferings are much more burdensome to him, than to confirmed Christians; and therefore he is more easily tempted into omissions and impatience, and walketh not so evenly or comfortably with God. When the spirit is willing, it yieldeth oft to the weakness of the flesh, because it is willing in too remiss a degree; Matt. xxvi. 41. Gal. ii. 14.

3. But the seeming Christian (though notionally and generally he may approve of strictness) yet secretly at the heart hath always this reserve, that he will not serve God at too dear a rate. His worldly felicity he cannot part with, for all the hopes of the life to come; and yet he will not, he dare not renounce and give up those hopes; and therefore he maketh himself a religion of the easiest and cheapest parts of Christianity, (among which, sometimes, the strictest opinions may fall out to be one part, so be it they be separated from the strictest practice :) and this easy, cheap religion he will needs believe to be true Christianity and godliness, and so will hope to be saved upon these terms: and though he cannot but know that it is the certain character of a hypocrite, to have any thing nearer and dearer to his heart than God, yet he hopeth that it is not so with him, because his convinced judgment can say, that God is best, and the world is vanity, while yet his heart and affections so much contradict his opinion, as almost to say, "There is no God;" for his heart knoweth and loveth no God as God, that is, above his worldly happiness. He is resolved to do so much in religion as he findeth necessary to delude his conscience, and make himself believe that he is godly,

and shall be saved ; but when he cometh to forsake all, and take up the cross, and practice the costliest parts of duty, then you shall see that mammon was better loved than God, and he will go away sorrowful, and hope to be saved upon easier terms (Luke xviii. 23.), for he was never resigned absolutely to God.

XV. 1. A confirmed Christian is one that taketh self-denial for the one half of his religion ; and therefore hath bestowed one half of his endeavors to attain and exercise it. He knoweth that the fall of man was a turning to himself from God ; and that selfishness and want of love to God, are the sum of all corruption and ungodliness ; and that the love of God and self-denial are the sum of all religion ; and that conversion is nothing but the turning of the heart from carnal self to God by Christ : and therefore on this hath his care and labor been so successfully laid out, that he hath truly and practically found out something which is much better than himself, and to be loved and preferred before himself, and which is to be his chief and ultimate end. He maketh not a God of himself any more, but useth himself for God, to fulfil his will, as a creature of his own, that hath no other end and use : he no more preferreth himself above all the world, but esteemeth himself a poor and despicable part of the world, and more highly valueth the honor of God, and the welfare of the church, and the good of many, than any interest of his own. Though God in nature hath taught him to regard his own felicity and to love himself, and not to seek the glory of God, and the good of many souls in opposition to his own, yet he hath taught him to prefer them (though in conjunction) much before his own : for reason telleth him that man is nothing in comparison of God, and that we are made by him and for him, and that the welfare of the church or public societies, is better (in order to the highest ends) than the welfare of some one. Selfishness in the unregenerate, is like an inflammation or imposthume, which draweth the humors from other parts of the body to itself : the interest of God and man are all swallowed up in the regard that men have to self-interest : and the love of God and our neighbor is turned into self-love. But self is as annihilated in the confirmed Christian, so that it ruleth not his judgment, his affections, or his choice : and he that lived in and to himself, as if God and all the world were but for him, doth now live to God, as one

that is good for nothing else, and findeth himself in seeking him that is infinitely above himself; Luke xiv. 31—33. Phil. ii. 4. 21.

2. And the weak Christian hath attained to so much self-denial, that self is not predominant in him against the love of God and his neighbor; but yet above all other sins, too great a measure of selfishness still remaineth in him. These words 'own, and mine, and self,' are too significant with him; every thing of his own is regarded inordinately, with partiality, and too much selfishness. A word against himself, or an injury to himself, is more to him than worse against his brother: he is too little mindful of the glory of God, and of the public good, and the souls of others; and even when he is mindful of his own soul, he is too regardless of the souls of many, that by prayer, or exhortation, or other means, he ought to help: as a small candle lighteth but a little way, and a small fire heateth not far off, so is his love so much confined, that it reacheth not far from him: he valueth his friends too much upon their respect to please himself, and loveth men too much, as they are partial for him; and too little upon the pure account of grace, and their love to Christ and serviceableness to the church. He easily overvalueth his own abilities, and is too confident of his own understanding, and apt to have too high conceits of any opinions that are his own; he is too apt to be tempted unto uncharitableness against those that cross him in his interest or way. He is apt to be too negligent in the work of God, when any self-interest doth stand against it; and too much to seek himself, his own esteem, or his own commodity, when he should devote himself to the good of souls, and give up himself to the work of God: though he is not like the hypocrite, that preferreth himself before the will of God and the common good, yet selfishness greatly stoppeth, interrupteth, and hindereth him in God's work; and any great danger, or loss, or shame, or other concernment of his own, doth seem a greater matter to him, and oftener turn him out of the way, than it will with a confirmed Christian. They were not all hypocrites that Paul speaketh of in that sad complaint, "For I have no man like-minded (to Timothy) who will naturally care for your state; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" (Phil. ii. 20, 21.) that is, they too much seek their own, and not entirely enough the things that are Christ's: which Timothy did

naturally, as if he had been born to it; and grace had made the love of Christ, and the souls of men, and the good of others, as natural to him, as the love of himself. Alas! how loudly do their own distempers, and soul-miscarriages, and the divisions and calamities of the church, proclaim, that the weaker sort of Christians have yet too much selfishness, and that self-denial is lamentably imperfect in them.

3. But in the seeming Christian, selfishness is still the predominant principle; he loveth God but for himself; and he never had any higher end than self: all his religion, his opinions, his practice is animated by self-love, and governed by it, even by the love of carnal self. Self-esteem, self-conceitedness, self-love, self-willedness, self-seeking, and self-saving are the constitution of his heart and life. He will be of that opinion, and way and party in religion, which selfishness directeth him to choose. He will go no further in religion than self-interest and safety will allow him to go. He can change his friend, and turn his love into hatred, and his praises into reproach, whenever self-interest shall require it. He can make himself believe, and labor to make others believe, that the wisest and holiest servants of God are erroneous, humorous, hypocrites, and insufferable, if they do but stand cross to his opinions and interest: for he judgeth of them, and loveth or hateth them, principally as they conform to his will and interest, or as they are against it. As the godly measure all persons and things, by the will and interest of God, so do all ungodly men esteem them as they stand in reference to themselves. When their factious interest required it, the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, could make themselves and others believe, that the Son of God himself was a breaker of the law, and an enemy to Cæsar, and a blasphemer, and unworthy to live on the earth; and that Paul was a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among the people, and a ringleader of a sect, and a profaner of the temple; (Acts xxiv. 5, 6.) and which of the prophets and apostles did they not persecute? Because Christ's doctrine doth cross the interest of selfish men, therefore the world doth so generally rise up against it with indignation, even as a country will rise against an invading enemy; for he cometh to take away that which is dearest to them: as it is said of Luther, that he meddled

with the pope's crown, and the friars' bellies; and therefore no wonder if they swarmed all about his ears. Selfishness is so general and deeply rooted, that, (except with a few self-denying saints,) self-love and self-interest rule the world. And if you would know how to please a graceless man, serve but his carnal interest, and you have done it: be of his opinion (or take on you to be so,) applaud him, admire him, flatter him, obey him, promote his preferment, honor and wealth, be against his enemies; in a word, make him your God, and sell your soul to gain his favor, and so it is possible you may gain it.

XVI. 1. A Christian indeed hath so far mortified the flesh, and brought all his senses and appetites into subjection to sanctified reason, as that there is no great rebellion or perturbation in his mind: but a little matter, a holy thought, or a word from God, doth presently rebuke and quiet his inordinate desires. The flesh is as a well-broken and well-ridden horse, that goeth on his journey obediently and quietly, and not with striving, and chafing, and vexatious resisting: though still flesh will be flesh, and will be weak, and will fight against the Spirit, so that we cannot do all the good we would; (Isa. v. 17. Rom. vii. 16, 17, &c.) yet in the confirmed Christian, it is so far tamed and subdued, that its rebellion is much less, and its resistance weaker, and more easily overcome: it causeth not any notable unevenness in his obedience, nor blemishes in his life; it is no other than consisteth with a readiness to obey the will of God. Gal. v. 24, 25. 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof: they run not as uncertainly; they fight not as one that beateth the air; but they keep under their bodies and bring them into subjection, lest by any means they should be castaways. They put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof;" Rom. xiii. 13, 14. As we see to a temperate man, how sweet and easy temperance is, when to a glutton, or drunkard, or riotous liver it is exceeding hard; so it is in all other points with a confirmed Christian. He hath so far crucified the flesh, that it is as dead to its former lusts; and so far mastered it, that it doth easily and quickly yield. And this maketh the life of such a Christian, not

only pure, but very easy to him, in comparison of other men's : nay, more than this, he can use his sense (as he can use the world, the objects of sense,) in subserviency to faith and his salvation. His eye doth but open a window to his mind, to behold and admire the Creator in his work. His taste of the sweetness of the creatures is but a means, by which the sweeter love of God doth pass directly to his heart. His sense of pleasure is but the passage of spiritual, holy pleasure to his mind. His sense of bitterness and pain is but the messenger to tell his heart of the bitterness and vexatiousness of sin. As God in the creation of us, made our senses but as the inlet and passage for himself into our minds, (even as he made all the creatures to represent him to us by this passage ;) so grace doth restore our very senses (with the creature) to this their holy, original use ; that the goodness of God, through the goodness of the creature, may pass to our hearts, and be the effect and end of all.

2. But for the weak Christian, though he have mortified the deeds of the body by the Spirit, and liveth not after the flesh, but be freed from its captivity or reign ; (Gal. v. 24. Rom. viii. 1. 7—13.) yet hath he such remnants of concupiscence and sensuality, as make it a far harder matter to him to live in temperance, and deny his appetite, and govern his senses, and restrain them from rebellion and excess : he is like a weak man upon an ill-ridden, headstrong horse, who hath much ado to keep his saddle and keep his way. He is more strongly inclined to fleshly lusts, or excess in meat, or drink, or sleep, or sports, or some fleshly pleasure, than the mortified, temperate person is, and therefore is oftener guilty of some excess ; so that his life is a very tiresome conflict, and very uneasy to himself, because the less the flesh is mortified, the more able it is to raise perturbations, and to put faith and reason to a continual flight. And most of the scandals and blemishes of his life arise from hence, even the successes of the flesh against the Spirit ; so that (though he live not in any gross or wilful sins;) yet in lesser measures of excess he is too frequently overtaken : how few be there that in meat and sleep do not usually exceed their measure ? And they are easily tempted to libertine opinions, which indulge the flesh, having a weaker preservative against them than stronger Christians have ; Matt. xvi. 22, 23. Gal. v. 13. i. 16. ii. 12—14. Col. ii. 11.

3. But the seeming Christian is really carnal. The flesh is the predominant part with him ; and the interest of the flesh is the ruling interest. He washeth away the outward filth, and in hope of salvation, will be as religious as the flesh will give him leave ; and will deny it in some smaller matters, and will serve it in a religious way, and not in so gross and impudent a manner as the atheists and openly profane. But for all that he never conquered the flesh indeed ; but seeketh its prosperity more than the pleasing of God and his salvation : and among prayers, and sermons, and holy conference, and books, yea, and formal fastings too, he is serving the flesh with so much the more dangerous impenitency, by how much the more his cloak of formality hindereth him from the discerning of his sin ; many an one that is of unblemished reputation in religion, doth constantly serve his appetite in meat and drink, (though without any notable excess,) and his fleshly mind in the pleasure of his dwelling, wealth, and accommodations, as much as some profane ones do, if not much more. And whenever it cometh to a parting trial, they will shew that the flesh was the ruling part, and will venture their souls to secure its interest ; Luke xviii. 23. xiv. 33. Rom. viii. 5—7. 9. 13. Matt. xiii. 21, 22. Jude 19.

XVII. 1. Hence it followeth that a Christian indeed preferreth the means of his spiritual benefit and salvation incomparably before all corporal commodities and pleasures. He had rather dwell under the teaching and guidance of an able, experienced pastor, though it be cross to his prosperity and worldly gain, than to live under an ignorant or dead-hearted preacher, when it furthereth his trading or more accommodateth his flesh : (though yet he must not remove when God layeth any restraint upon him, by his duty to his family, or others :) he had rather, if he be a servant, dwell in a family where he may do or receive most spiritual good, than in a carnal family, where he may have more ease, and better fare, and greater wages. If he be to marry, he had rather have one that hath wisdom and piety without wealth, than one that hath riches without wisdom and piety. He is more glad of an opportunity (in public or private) for the profit of his soul, than of a feast, or a good bargain, or an opportunity for some gain in worldly things ; Matt. vi. 20. 33.

2. And the weak Christian is of the same mind in the main. He valueth mercies and helps for his soul, above those for his body. But it is with less zeal, and more indifference; and, therefore, is more easily and often drawn to the omitting of spiritual duties, and neglect of spiritual helps and mercies; and goeth to them with more averseness, and as driven by necessity, and is much less sensible of his loss, when he misseth of any such spiritual helps; Luke x. 41, 42. Heb. x. 25. Acts ii. 42. iv. 32.

3. But the seeming Christian, being a real worldling, doth serve God and mammon; and mammon with the first and best. He had rather miss a sermon, than a good bargain or commodity; he had rather dwell where he may thrive best, or have most ease and pleasure, than where he may find the greatest helps for heaven; he will be religious, but it must be with an easy, and a pleasant, and a merry religion, which may not be too niggardly with his flesh, nor use it too strictly: unless when one day's austerity may procure him an indulgence for his liberty all the week following. He will make his bargain with Christ, so as to be sure that he may not lose by him; and he will not believe that God is pleased with that which is much displeasing to his flesh; Rom. viii. 5—8. 13. Matt. xiii. 21, 22.

XVIII. 1. The Christian indeed is one that is crucified to the world, and the world is as a crucified thing to him; Gal. vi. 14. He hath overcome the world by faith, and followeth Christ in the pursuit of it, to a perfect conquest; 1 John v. 4, 5. John xvi. 33. He has seen through all its glossing vanity, and foreseen what it will prove at last. He hath found that it cannot quiet conscience, nor reconcile the guilty soul to God, nor save it from his consuming wrath; nor serve instead of God or heaven, of Christ or grace; but will cast off its servants in their last extremity, naked and desolate, into remediless despair. And, therefore, he is resolvedly at a point with all things under the sun. Let them take the world for their portion and felicity that will; for his part, he accounteth all things in it dung and dross, in comparison of Christ and things eternal; Phil. iii. 7, 8. 19, 20. All the preferments, and honors, and command, and wealth, and greatness of the world, do not seem to him a bait considerable, to make a wise man once question whether he

should persevere in faithfulness to God, or to tempt him to commit one wilful sin. He would not speak, or own a lie, or approve the sin of another, for all that worldlings enjoy in their greatest prosperity while they live. He accounteth his peace with God and conscience, and his communion with Christ in the greatest poverty, to be incomparably better than all the pleasures and commodities of sin; yea, the very reproach of Christ is better to him than all the treasures of court or country; Heb. xi. 25, 26. Grace hath mortified and annihilated the world to him. And that which is dead and nothing, can do nothing with him against God and his soul. He looketh on it as a carrion, which dogs may love and fight for, but is unfit to be the food of man. He is going to the land of promise, and therefore will not contend for an inheritance in this howling wilderness. Whether he be high or low, rich or poor, are so small a part of his concerns, that he is almost indifferent to them, farther than as the interest of God and souls may accidentally be concerned in them. The world set against God, and heaven, and holiness, doth weigh no more in his estimation, than a feather that is put in the balance against a mountain, or all the world. He feeleth no great force in such temptations, as would draw him to win the world, and lose his soul. His eye and heart are where his God and treasure are, above; and worldly wealth and greatness are below him, even under his feet. He thinketh not things temporal worth the looking at, in comparison of things eternal; 2 Cor. iv. 18. He thinketh that their money and riches do deservedly perish with them, who think all the money in the world to be a thing comparable with grace; Acts viii. 20.

2. And the weak Christian is of the same judgment and resolution in the main; but yet the world retaineth a greater interest in his heart; it grieveth him more to lose it; it is a stronger temptation to him. To deny all the preferments, and honors, and riches of it, seemeth a greater matter to him; and he doth it with more striving, and less ease; and sometimes the respect of worldly things prevaieth with him in lesser matters, to wound his conscience, and maketh work for repentance; and such are so entangled in worldly cares, and prosperity tasteth so sweet with them, that grace even languisheth and falleth into a consumption, and almost into a swoon. So much

do some such let out their hearts to the world, which they renounced, and scrape for it with so much care and eagerness, and contend with others about their commodities and rights, that they seem to the standers by to be as worldly as worldlings themselves are ; and become a shame to their profession, and make ungodly persons say, ‘ Your godly professors are as covetous as any : ’ 2 Tim. iv. 10.

3. But seeming Christians are the servants of the world ; when they have learnt to speak most hardly of it, it hath their hearts. Heaven, as I said before, is valued but as a reserve, when they know they can keep the world no longer. They have more sweet and pleasing thoughts and speeches of the world, than they have of God and the world to come. It hath most of their hearts when God is most preferred by their tongues. There it is that they are daily laying up their treasure, and there they must leave it at the parting hour, when they go naked out as they came naked in. The love of deceitful riches choaketh the word of God, and it withereth in them, and becometh unfruitful ; Matt. xiii. 22. They go away sorrowful because of their beloved riches, when they should part with all for the hopes of heaven (Luke xviii. 23.), yea, though they are beggars, that never have a day’s prosperity in the world, for all that, they love it better than heaven, and desire that which they cannot get, because they have not an eye of faith, to see that better world which they neglect, and therefore take it for an uncertain thing. Nor are their carnal natures suitable to it, and therefore they mind it not ; Rom. viii. 7. When a hypocrite is at the best, he is but a religious worldling ; the world is nearer to his heart than God is, but “ pure religion keepeth a man unspotted of the world ; ” James i. 27.

XIX. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that still seeth the end in all that he doth, and that is before him in his way, and looketh not at things as at the present they seem or relish to the flesh, or to shortsighted men ; but as they will appear and be judged of at last. The first letter maketh not the word, nor the first word the sentence, without the last. Present time is quickly past, and therefore he less regardeth what things seem at present, than what they will prove to all eternity. When temptations offer him a bait to sin, with the present profit, or pleasure, or honor, he seeth at once the final shame ;

he seeth all worldly things as they are seen by a dying man, and as after the general conflagration they will be. He seeth the godly man in his adversity and patience, as entering into his Master's joys; he seeth the derided, vilified saint, as ready to stand justified by Christ at his right hand; and the liars of the malicious world as ready to cover themselves with shame. He seeth the wicked in the height of their prosperity, as ready to be cut down and withered, and their pampered flesh to turn to dirt; and their filthy and malicious souls to stand condemned by Christ at his left hand; and to hear, "Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" Matt. xxv. 1 Pet. i. 24. James i. 10, 11. Psal. lxxiii. xxxvii. Therefore it is that he valued grace, because he knoweth what it will be; and therefore it is that he flieth from sin, "because he knoweth the terrors of the Lord," and what it will prove to the sinner in the end; and how sinners themselves will curse the day that ever they did commit it; and wish when it is too late, that they had chosen the holiness and patience of the saints. And therefore it is that he pitieth rather than envieth the prosperous enemies of the church, because he forseeth what the "end will be of them that obey not the Gospel of Christ. And if the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. 2 Thes. i. 8—10. If the wicked unbelievers saw but the ending of all things as he doth, they would be all then of his mind and way. This putteth so much life into his prayers, his obedience, and patience, because he seeth the end in all; Deut. xxxii. 29. Prov. xix. 20. Isa. xlvii. 7.

2. And the weakest Christian doth the same in the main, so far as to turn his heart from things temporal to things eternal; and to resolve him in his main choice, and to conduct the course of his life towards heaven. But yet in particular actions he is often stopped in present things, and forgetfully loseth the sight of the end, and so is deluded and enticed into sin, for want of seeing that which should have preserved him. He is like one that traveleth over hills and vallies, who when he is upon the hills doth see the place that he is going to; but when he cometh into the vallies it is out of his sight. Too oft doth the weak Christian think of things as they appear at the present, with little sense of the change that is near. When he seeth the baits of

sin, whether riches, or beauty, or meat and drink, or any thing that is pleasing to the senses, the remembrance of the end doth not so quickly and powerfully work, to prevent his deceived imaginations as it ought. And when poverty, or shame, or sufferings, or sickness are presented to him, the foresight of the end is not so speedy and powerful in clearing his judgment, and settling his resolution, and preventing his misapprehension and troubles as it ought. And hence comes his oft mistakes and falls; and herein consisteth much of that foolishness, which he confesseth when repentance bringeth him to himself; 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

3. But the seeming Christian hath so dim and doubtful a foresight of the end, and it is so frequently out of his mind, that things present do carry away his heart, and have the greatest power and interest with him; and are most regarded and sought after in this life. For he is purblind, not seeing afar off, as it is said, 2 Pet. i. 9. He wanteth that faith which is the "substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen;" Heb. xi. 1. Things promised in another world seem to him too uncertain or too far off to be preferred before all the happiness of this world; he is resolved to make his best of that which he hath in hand, and to prefer possession before such hopes. Little doth his heart perceive what a change is near, and how the face of all things will be altered! How sin will look, and how the minds of sinners will be changed, and what all the riches, and pleasures, and honors of the world will appear at the latter end! He foreseeth not the day when the slothful, and the worldly, and the fleshly, and the proud, and the enemies of godliness, shall all wish in vain, 'O that we had laid up our treasure in heaven, and labored for the food that perisheth not, and had set less by all the vanities of the world, and had imitated the holiest and most mortified believers!' Though the hypocrite can himself foretel all this, and talk of it to others, yet his belief of it is so dead, and his sensuality so strong, that he liveth by sense, and not by that belief: and present things are practically preferred by him, and bear the sway, so that he needeth those warnings of God as well as the profane, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, and that they would consider their latter end;" Deut. xxxii. 29. And he is one of the fool-

ish ones (Matt. xxv. 8. 11.), who are seeking oil for their lamps when it is too late, and are crying out, "Lord, Lord, open to us," when the door is shut; and will not know the time of their visitation, nor know effectually in this their day, the things which belong to their everlasting peace.

XX. 1. The Christian indeed is one that liveth upon God alone; his faith is divine; his love, and obedience, and confidence are divine; his chiefest converse is divine; his hopes and comforts are divine. As it is God that he dependeth on, and trusteth to, and studieth to please above all the world, so it is God's approbation that he taketh up with for his justification and reward. He took him for his absolute Governor and Judge, and full felicity, in the day when he took him for his God. He can live in peace without man's approbation. If men are never acquainted with his sincerity, or virtues, or good deeds, it doth not discourage him nor hinder him from his holy course; he is, therefore, the same in secret as in public, because no place is secret from God. If men turn his greatest virtues or duties to his reproach, and slander him, and make him odious to men, and represent him as they did Paul, a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and the ringleader of a sect, and make him as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, this changeth him not, for it changeth not his felicity, nor doth he miss of his reward; 1 Cor. iv. 9—14. Read the words in the text. Though he hath so much suspicion of his own understanding, and reverence for wiser men's, that he will be glad to learn, and will hear reason from any one; yet praise and dispraise are matters of very small regard with him; and as to himself, he counteth it but a very small thing to be judged of men, whether they justify or condemn him; because they are fallible, and have not the power of determining any thing to his great commodity or detriment; nor is it their judgment to which he stands or falls; 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. He hath a more dreadful, or comfortable judgment to prepare for. Man is of small account with him in comparison of God; Rom. viii. 33—36.

2. And though with the weakest true Christian it is so also as to the predominancy of God's esteem and interest in him, yet is his weakness daily visible in the culpable effects. Though God have

the chiefest place in his esteem, yet man hath much more than his due. The thoughts and words of men seem to such, of far greater importance than they should. Praise and dispraise, favors and injuries, are things which affect their hearts too much; they bear not the contempts and wrongs of men with so quiet and satisfied a mind, as beseemeth those that live upon God. They have so small an experience of the comforts of God in Christ, that they are tasting the deeper of other delights and spare them not so easily as they ought to do. God, without friends, or house, or land, or maintenance, or esteem in the world, doth not fully quiet them; but there is a deal of peevish impatience left in their minds, though it doth not drive them away from God.

3. But the seeming Christian can better take up with the world alone than with God alone; God is not so much missed by him as the world; he always breaks with Christ, when it cometh to forsaking all; he is godly notionally and professedly, and therefore may easily say that God is his portion, and enough for those that put their trust in him; but his heart never consented truly to reduce these words to practice. When it comes to the trial, the praise or dispraise of man, and the prosperity or matters of the world, do signify more with him than the favor or displeasure of God, and can do more with him. Christ, and riches, and esteem, he could be content with; but he cannot away with a naked Christ alone. Therefore he is indeed a practical atheist, even when he seemeth most religious: for if he had ever taken God for his God indeed, he had certainly taken him as his portion, felicity, and all; and therefore as enough for him without the creature; Luke xviii. 23.

XXI. 1. For all this it followeth, that a Christian indeed hath with himself devoted all that he hath to God, and so all that he hath is sanctified: he is only in doubt oftentimes in particular cases, what God would have him do with himself and his estate; but never in doubt whether they are to be wholly employed for God, in obedience to his will, as far as he can know it, and therefore doth estimate every creature and condition, purely as it relateth unto God and life eternal. "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" is written upon all that he hath and doth; he taketh it as sent from God, and useth it as his

Master's goods and talents ; not chiefly for himself, but for his Master's ends and will. God appeareth to him in the creature, and is the life, and sweetness and glory of the creature to him. His first question in every business he undertaketh, or every place or condition that he chooseth is, how it conduceth to the pleasing of God, and to his spiritual ends ; " whether he eateth or drinketh, or whatever he doth, he doth all to the Glory of God ;" 1 Cor. x. 31. The posy engraven on his heart is the name of GOD, with " **OF HIM, AND THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM ARE ALL THINGS, TO HIM BE GLORY FOR EVER, AMEN ;**" Rom. xi. 36. He liveth as a steward that useth not his own, though yet he have a sufficient reward for his fidelity ; and he keepeth accounts both of receivings and layings out, and reckoneth all to be worse than lost, which he findeth not expended on his Lord's account. For himself he asketh not that which is sweetest to the flesh, but that which is fittest to his end and work ; and therefore desireth not riches (for himself) but his daily bread, and food convenient for him ; and having food and raiment is therewith content, having taken godliness for his gain. He asketh not for superfluity, nor for any thing to consume it on his lusts, nor to become provision for his flesh, to satisfy the wills thereof. But as a runner in his race desireth not any provisions which may hinder him ; and therefore " forgetting the things which are behind (the world which he hath turned his back upon,) he reacheth forth to the things which are before, (the crown of glory,) and presseth toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus ;" not turning an eye to any thing that would stop him in his course. Thus while he is employed about things below, his mind and conversation are heavenly and divine, while all things are estimated and used purely for God and heaven ; Luke xvi. 1, 2. 1 Pet. iv. 10. Tit. i. 15. Prov. xxx. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6. 8. James iv. 3. Rom. xiii. 14. Phil. iii. 13—15.

2. But the weak Christian, though he have all this in desire, and be thus affected and resolved in the main, and liveth to God in the scope and course of his life, yet is too often looking aside, and valuing the creature carnally for itself ; and oftentimes useth it for the pleasing of the flesh, and almost like a common man ; his house, and land, and friends, and pleasures, are relished too carnally, as his

own accommodations ; and though he walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, yet he hath too much of the fleshly taste, and is greatly out in his accounts with God ; and turneth many a thing from his Master's use to the service of the flesh ; and though he be not as the slothful, wicked servant, yet is it but little improvement that he maketh of his talent ; Matt. xxv. 17. 26—28.

3. But the seeming Christian being carnal and selfish, while his notions and professions are spiritual and Divine, and his selfish and fleshly interest being predominant, it must needs follow that he estimateth all things principally as they respect his fleshly interest, and useth them principally for his carnal self, even when in the manner he seemeth to use them most religiously, (as I have said before ;) and so to the defiled nothing is pure ; Rom. viii. 5—8. 13. Tit. i. 15.


XXII. 1. A Christian indeed hath a promptitude to obey, and a ready compliance of his will to the will of God. He hath not any great averseness and withdrawing, and doth not the good which he doth with much backwardness and striving against it ; but as in a well-ordered watch or clock, the spring or poise doth easily set all the wheels agoing, and the first wheel easily moveth the rest ; so is the will of a confirmed Christian presently moved, as soon as he knoweth the will of God. He stayeth not for other moving reasons ; God's will is his reason. This is the habit of subjection and obedience, which makes him say, " Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth ; " and " Lord what wouldst thou have me do ? " And " Teach me to do thy will, O God ; " Psal. cxliii. 10. 1 Sam. iii. 10. Acts ix. 6. " I delight to do thy will, O God ; yea thy law is within my heart ; " Psal. xl. 8. The " law written in our heart, " is nothing else but the knowledge of God's laws, with this habit or promptitude to obey them ; the special fruit of the Spirit of grace.

2. But a weak Christian, though he love God's will and way, and be sincerely obedient to him, yet in many particulars, where his corruption contradicteth, hath a great deal of backwardness and striving of the flesh against the Spirit ; and there needs many words and many considerations and vehement persuasions, yea, and sharp afflictions, sometimes, to bring him to obey. And he is fain to drive on his backward

heart, and hath frequent use for the rod and spur, and therefore is more slow and uneven in his obedience ; Gal. v. 17.

3. The seeming Christian is forward in those easy, cheaper parts of duty, which serve to delude his carnal heart, and quiet him in a worldly life ; but he is so backward to thorough sincere obedience in the most flesh-displeasing parts of duty, that he is never brought to it at all ; but either he will fit his opinions in religion to his will, and will not believe them to be duties, or else he will do something like them in a superficial, formal way ; but the thing itself he will not do. For he is more obedient to his carnal mind and lusts than he is to God ; Rom. viii. 6, 7. and forwarder much to sacrifice than obedience ; Eccles. v. 1.

XXIII. 1. A Christian indeed doth daily delight himself in God, and findeth more solid content and pleasure in his commands and promises, than in all this world ; his duties are sweet to him, and his hopes are sweeter. Religion is not a tiresome task to him ; the yoke of Christ is easy to him, and his burden light, and his commandments are not grievous ; Psal. xxxvii. 4 i. 2. xl. 8. xciv. 19. cxix. 16. 35. 47. 70. Matt. xi. 28, 29. John v. 3. That which others take as physic, for mere necessity, against their wills, he goeth to as a feast, with appetite and delight ; he prayeth because he loveth to pray ; and he thinks and speaks of holy things, because he loveth to do it. And hence it is that he is so much in holy duty, and so unwearied, because he loveth it, and taketh pleasure in it. As voluptuous persons are oft and long at their sports, or merry company, because they love them, and take pleasure in them : so are such Christians oft and long in holy exercises, because their hearts are set upon them as their recreation, and the way and means of their felicity. If it be a delight to a studious man to read those books which most clearly open the abstrusest mysteries of the sciences, or to converse with the most wise and learned men ; and if it be a delight to men to converse with their dearest friends, or to hear from them and read their letters ; no marvel if it be a delight to a Christian indeed, to read the Gospel mysteries of love, and to find there the promises of everlasting happiness, and to see in the face of Jesus Christ the clearest image of the Eternal Deity, and foresee the joys



which he shall have for ever. He sticketh not in superficial formality, but breaking the shell doth feed upon the kernel. It is not bare external duty which he is taken up with, nor any mere creature that is his content; but it is God in creatures and ordinances that he seeketh and liveth upon; and therefore it is that religion is so pleasant to him. He would not change his heavenly delights which he findeth in the exercise of faith, and hope, and love to God, for all the carnal pleasures of this world; he had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents or palaces of wickedness. A day in God's court is better to him than a thousand in the court of the greatest prince on earth. He is not a stranger to "the joy in the Holy Ghost," in which the kingdom of God doth in part consist; Rom. xiv. 17. Psal. lxxxiv. 10. 2. lxxv. 4. "In the multitude of his thoughts within him, the comforts of God do delight his soul;" Psal. xciv. 19. "His meditation of God is sweet, and he is glad in the Lord;" Psal. civ. 34. The freest and sweetest of his thoughts and words run out upon God and the matters of salvation. The word of God is sweeter to him than honey, and better than thousands of gold and silver; Psal. xix. 10. cxix. 72. 103. Prov. xvi. 24. And because "his delight is in the law of the Lord, therefore doth he meditate in it day and night;" Psal. i. 2. He seeth great reason for all those commands, "Rejoice evermore;" (1 Thess. v. 16.) "Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice;" (Psal. lxxviii. 3, 4. lxiv. 10. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 11.) "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy all that are upwright in heart." He is sorry for the poor, unhappy world, that have no better things than meat, and drink, and clothes, and house, and land, and money, and lust, and play, and domineering over others, to rejoice in: and heartily he wisheth they had but a taste of the saint's delights, that it might make them spit out their luscious, unclean, unwholesome pleasures. One look to Christ, one promise of the Gospel, one serious thought of the life which he must live with God for ever, doth afford his soul more solid comfort than all the kingdoms of the earth can afford. And though he live not continually in these high delights, yet peace with God, and peace of conscience, and some delight in God and godliness, is

the ordinary temperature of his soul, and higher degrees are given him in season for his cordials and his feasts.

2. But the weak Christian hath little of these spiritual delights; his ordinary temper is to apprehend that God and his ways are indeed most delectable; his very heart acknowledgeth that they are worthiest and fittest to be the matter of his delights: and if he could attain assurance of his especial interest in the love of God, and his part in Christ and life eternal, he would then rejoice in them indeed, and would be more glad than if he were Lord of all the world; but in the meantime, either his fears and doubts are damping his delights; or else (which is much worse) his appetite is dull, and God and holiness relish not with him half so sweetly, as they do with the confirmed Christian; and he is too busy in tasting of fleshly and forbidden pleasures, which yet more deprave his appetite, and dull his desires to the things of God; so that though in his estimation, choice, resolution and endeavor, he much preferreth God before the world; yet as to any delightful sweetness in him, it is but little that he tasteth. He loveth God with a desiring love, and with a seeking love, but with very little of a delighting love. The remnant of corrupt and alien affections do weaken his affections to the things above; and his infant measure of spiritual life, conjunct with many troublesome diseases, allow him very little of the joy of the Holy Ghost. Nay, perhaps he hath more grief, and fear, and doubts, and trouble, and perplexity of mind, than ever he had before he turned unto God, and perhaps he hath yet less pleasure in God, than he had before in sin and sensuality: because he had his sin in a state of fruition, but he hath God only in a seeking, hoping state; he hath the best of sin, and all that ever it will afford him; but he hath yet none of the full felicity which he expecteth in God: the fruition of him is yet but in the prospect of hope. His sensual, sinful life was in its maturity, and the object present in its most alluring state; but his spiritual life of faith and love, is but yet in its weak beginnings, and the object absent from our sight: he is so busy at first in blowing up his little spark, not knowing whether the fire will kindle or go out, that he hath little of the use or pleasure, either of its light or warmth. Infants come crying into the world, and afterwards oftener cry than laugh;

their senses and reason are not yet perfected, or exercised to partake of the pleasures of life : and when they do come to know what laughter is, they will laugh and cry almost in a breath. And those weak Christians that do come to taste of joy and pleasure in their religious state, it is commonly but as a flash of lightning, which leaveth them as dark as they were before. Sometimes in the beginning, upon their first apprehensions of the love of God in Christ, and of the pardon of their sins, and the privileges of their new condition, and the hopes of everlasting joy, their hearts are transported with unspeakable delight ; which is partly from the newness of the thing, and partly because God will let them have some encouraging taste, to draw them further, and to convince them of the difference between the pleasures of sin, and the comforts of believing ; but these first rejoicings soon abate, and turn into a life of doubts, and fears, and griefs, and care, till they are grown to greater understanding, experience, and settledness in the things of God ; the root must grow greater and deeper, before it will bear a greater top. Those Christians that in the weakness of grace have frequent joys, are usually persons whose weak and passionate nature doth occasion it : (some women especially) that have strong fancies and passions are always passionately affected with whatsoever they apprehend. And these are like a ship that is tossed in a tempest ; that is one while lifted up as to the clouds, and presently cast down as into an infernal gulf : there one day in great joy, and quickly after in as great perplexity and sorrow, because their comforts or sorrows do follow their present feeling, or mutable apprehensions. But when they come to be confirmed Christians, they will keep a more constant judgment of themselves, and their own condition, and constantly see their grounds of comfort ; and when they cannot raise their souls to any high and passionate joys, they yet walk in a settled peace of soul, and in such competent comforts, as make their lives to be easy and delightful ; being well pleased and contented with the happy condition that Christ hath brought them to, and thankful that he left them not in those foolish, vain, pernicious pleasures, which were the way to endless sorrows.

3. But the seeming Christian seeketh and taketh up his chief contentment in some carnal thing : if he be so poor and miserable as to have nothing in possession that can much delight him, he will hope for better days hereafter, and that hope shall be his chief delight ; or if he have no such hope he will be without delight ; and shew his love to the world and flesh, by mourning for that which he cannot have, as others do in rejoicing in what they do possess ; and he will, in such a desperate case of misery, be such to the world as the weak Christian is to God, who hath a mourning and desiring love, when he cannot reach to an enjoying and delightful love. His carnal mind most savoureth the things of the flesh, and therefore in them he findeth or seeketh his delights. Though yet he may have also a delight in his superficial kind of religion, his hearing, and reading, and praying, and in his ill-grounded hopes of life eternal : but all this is but subordinate to his chief, earthly pleasure ; “ Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God ; they ask of me the ordinances of justice ; they take delight in approaching unto God.” Isa. lviii. 2. And yet all this was subjected to a covetous, oppressing mind. “ He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended ;” Matt. xiii. 20. Whereby it appeareth that his love to the word, was subjected to his love to the world.

Object. ‘ But there are two sorts of people that seem to have no fleshly delights at all, and yet are not in the way to salvation, viz. the Quakers and Behmenists that live in great austerity, and some of the religious orders of the Papists, who afflict their flesh.’

Answ. Some of them undergo their fastings and penance for a day, that they may sin the more quietly all the week after ; and some of them proudly comfort themselves with the fancies and conceit of being and appearing more excellent in austerity than others ; and all these take up with a carnal sort of pleasure. As proud persons are pleased with their own, or other’s conceits of their beauty, or wit, or worldly greatness ; so prouder persons are pleased with

their own and other's conceits of their holiness. And "verily they have their reward;" Matt. vi. 2. But those of them that place their chief happiness in the love of God, and the eternal fruition of him in heaven, and seek this sincerely according to their helps and power, though they are misled into some superstitious errors, I hope I may number with those that are sincere ; for all their errors and the ill effects of them.

XXIV. 1. A confirmed Christian doth ordinarily discern the sincerity of his own heart, and consequently hath some well-grounded assurance of the pardon of his sins, and of the favor of God, and of his everlasting happiness ; and therefore no wonder if he live a peaceable and joyful life. For his grace is not so small as to be undiscernible, nor is it as a sleepy, buried seed or principle ; but it is almost of continual act ; and they that have a great degree of grace, and also keep it in lively exercise, do seldom doubt of it. Besides that they blot not their evidence by so many infirmities and falls. They are more in the light, and have more acquaintance with themselves, and more sense of the abundant love of God, and of his exceeding mercies, than weak Christians have ; and therefore must needs have more assurance. They have boldness of access to the throne of grace, without unreverent contempt ; Ephes. iii. 12. ii. 18. They have more of the spirit of adoption, and therefore more childlike confidence in God, and can call him Father with greater freedom and comfort than any others can : Rom. viii. 15, 16. Gal. iv. 6. Ephes. i. 6. 1 John v. 19, 20. "And we know that we are of God, and that the whole world lieth in wickedness : " &c.

2. But the weak Christian hath so small a degree of grace, and so much corruption, and his grace is so little in act, and his sin so much, that he seldom if ever attaineth to any well-grounded assurance, till he attain to a greater measure of grace. He differeth so little from the seeming Christian, that neither himself nor others do certainly discern the difference. When he searcheth after the truth of his faith, and love, and heavenly-mindedness, he findeth so much unbelief and averseness from God, and earthly-mindedness, that he cannot be certain which of them is predominant ; and whether the interest of this world or that to come, do bear the sway. So that he

is often in perplexities and fears, and more often in a dull uncertainty. And if he seem at any time to have assurance, it is usually but an ill-grounded persuasion of the truth; though it be true which he apprehendeth, when he taketh himself to be the child of God, yet it is upon unsound reasons that he judgeth so, or else upon sound reasons weakly and uncertainly discerned; so that there is commonly much of security, presumption, fancy, or mistake, in his greatest comforts. He is not yet in a condition fit for full assurance, till his love and obedience be more full.

3. But the seeming Christian cannot possibly in that estate, have either certainty, or good probability that he is a child of God, because it is not true: his seeming certainty is merely self-deceit, and his greatest confidence is but presumption, because the spirit of Christ is not within him, and therefore he is certainly none of his; Rom. viii. 9.

XXV. 1. The assurance of a confirmed Christian doth increase his alacrity and diligence in duty, and is always seen in his more obedient, holy, fruitful, life. The sense of the love and mercy of God, is as the rain upon the tender grass: he is never so fruitful, so thankful, so heavenly, as when he hath the greatest certainty that he shall be saved. The love of God is then shed abroad upon his heart by the Holy Ghost, which maketh him abound in love to God; Rom. v. 1—4. He is the more stedfast, immoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, when he is most certain that his labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; 1 Cor. xv. 58.

2. But the weak Christian is unfit yet to manage assurance well, and therefore it is that it is not given him; graces must grow proportionably together. If he be but confidently persuaded that he is justified and shall be saved, he is very apt to gather some consequence from it, that tendeth to security and to the remitting of his watchfulness and care. He is ready to be the bolder with sin, and stretch his conscience, and omit some duties, and take more fleshly liberty and ease, and think, 'Now I am a child of God, I am out of danger, I am sure I cannot totally fall away.' And though his judgment conclude not, 'therefore I may venture further upon worldly, fleshly pleasures, and need not be so strict and diligent as I was,' yet his

heart and practice thus conclude. And he is most obedient when he is most in fear of hell, and he is worst in his heart and life, when he is most confident that all his danger is past ; Heb. iv. 1, 2. iii. 14 —16.

3. But the seeming Christian, though he have no assurance, is hardened in his carnal state by his presumption. Had he but assurance to be saved without a holy life, he would cast off that very image of godliness which he yet retaineth. The conceit of his own sincerity and salvation, is that which deludeth and undoeth him. What sin would not gain or pleasure draw him to commit, if he were but sure to be forgiven ? It is fear of hell that causeth that seeming religion which he hath ; and therefore if that fear be gone all is gone ; and all his piety, and diligence, and righteousness, is come to nought ; Gal. vi. 3. John viii. 39. 42. 44.

XXVI. 1. For all his assurance, a confirmed Christian is so well acquainted with his manifold imperfections, and daily failings, and great unworthiness, that he is very low and vile in his own eyes ; and, therefore, can easily endure to be low and vile in the eyes of others. He hath a constant sense of the burden of his remaining sin ; especially he doth even abhor himself, when he findeth the averseness of his own heart to God, and how little he knoweth of him, and how little he loveth him, in comparison of what he ought ; and how little of heaven is upon his heart, and how strange and backward his thoughts are to the life to come. These are as fetters upon his soul. He daily groaneth under them as a captive, that he should be yet so carnal, and unable to shake off the remnant of his infirmities, as if he were sold under sin ; that is, in bondage to it ; Rom. vii. 14. He hateth himself more for the imperfections of his love and obedience to God, than hypocrites do for their reigning sin. And O how he longeth for the day of his deliverance ; Rom. vii. 24. He thinketh it no great injury for another to judge of him as he judgeth of himself, even to be less than the least of all God's mercies. He is more troubled for being overpraised and overvalued, than for being dispraised and vilified ; as thinking those that praise him are more mistaken, and lay the more dangerous snare for his soul. For he hath a special antipathy to pride ; and wondereth that

any rational man can be so blind as not to see enough to humble him. For his own part (in the midst of all God's graces) he seeth in himself so much darkness, imperfection, corruption, and want of further grace, that he is loathsome and burdensome continually to himself. If you see him sad, or troubled, and ask him the cause, it is ten to one but it is himself he complaineth of. The frowardest wife, the most undutiful child, the most disobedient servant, the most injurious neighbor, the most malicious enemy, is not half so great a trouble to him as he is to himself. He prayeth abundantly more against his own corruption, than against any of these. O could he but know and love God more, and be more in heaven, and willing to die, and freer from his own distempers, how easily could he bear all crosses, or injuries from others. He came to Christ's school as a little child (Matt. xviii. 3.), and still he is little in his own esteem; and, therefore, disesteem and contempt from others, is no great matter with him. He thinks it can be no great wrong that is done against so poor a worm, and so unworthy a sinner as himself, (except as God or the souls of men may be interested in the cause). He heartily approveth of the justice of God, in abhorring the proud; and hath learned that, Rom. xii. 10., "In honor preferring one another," and Gal v. 26, "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

2. But the remnant of pride is usually the most notable sin of the weak Christian; though it reigneth not, it foully blemisheth him. He would fain be taken for somebody in the church; he is ready to step up into a higher room, and to think himself wiser and better than he is. If he can but speak confidently of the principles of religion, and some few controversies which he hath made himself sick with, he is ready to think himself fit to be a preacher. He looketh through a magnifying-glass upon all his own performances and gifts; he loveth to be valued and praised; he can hardly bear to be slighted and dispraised, but is ready to think hardly of those that do it, if not to hate them in some degree: he loveth not to be found fault with, though it be necessary to his amendment; and though all this vice of pride be not so predominant in him, as to conquer his humility, yet doth it much obscure and interrupt it. And though he hate this his

pride, and strive against it, and lamenteth it before God, yet still it is the sorest ulcer in his soul. And should it prevail and overcome him, he would be abhorred of God, and it would be his ruin ; 2 Chron. xvi. 10. 12. Luke xxii. 24—26.

3. But in the hypocrite pride is the reigning sin. The praise of men is the air which he liveth in. He was never well acquainted with himself ; and never felt aright the burden of his sins and wants ; and, therefore, cannot bear contempt from others. Indeed, if his corrupt disposition turn most to the way of covetousness, tyranny, or lust, he can the easier bear contempt from others, as long as he hath his will at home ; and he can spare their love, if he can be but feared and domineer. But still his pride is predominant ; and when it affecteth not much the reputation of goodness, it affecteth the name of being rich or great. Sin may make him sordid, but grace doth not make him humble. Pride is the vital spirit of the corrupted state of man.

XXVII. 1. A confirmed Christian is acquainted with the deceitfulness of man's heart, and the particular corrupt inclinations that are in it ; and especially with his own ; and he is acquainted with the wiles and methods of the tempter, and what are the materials which he maketh his baits of, and what is the manner in which he spreadeth his nets. He seeth always some snares before him ; and what company soever he is in, or what business soever he is about, he walketh as among snares, which are visible to his sight ; and it is part of his business continually to avoid them. He liveth in a continual watch and warfare. He can resist much stronger and more subtle temptations than the weak can do. He is always armed, and knoweth what are the special remedies against each particular snare and sin ; Eph. vi. 2 Cor. ii. 11. Prov. i. 17. And he carrieth always his antidotes about him, as one that liveth in an infectious world, and in the midst of a froward and perverse generation, from which he is charged to save himself ; Phil. ii. 15. Acts ii. 40.

2. And the weak Christian is a soldier in the army of Christ, and is engaged in striving against sin (Heb. xii. 4.) ; and really taketh the flesh and world, as well as the devil, to be his enemies, and doth not only strive, but conquer in the main ; but yet, alas, how poorly is he

armed : how unskilful doth he manage his Christian armor : how often is he foiled and wounded : how many a temptation is he much unacquainted with : and how many a snare doth lie before him which he never did observe. And oft he is overcome in particular temptations, when he never perceiveth it, but thinks that he hath conquered.

3. But the hypocrite is fast ensnared when he glorieth most of his integrity, and is deceived by his own heart, and thinketh he is something, when he is nothing ; Gal. vi. 3. Luke xviii. 20—23. When he is thanking God that he is not as other men, he is rejoicing in his dreams, and sacrificing for the victory which he never obtained ; ver. 11. He is led by Satan captive at his will, when he is boasting of his uprightness ; and hath a beam of covetousness, or pride, or cruelty in his own eye, while he is reviling, or censuring another for the mote of some difference about a ceremony, or tolerable opinion. And usually such grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived ; Matt. vii. 3—5. 2 Tim. iii. 13.

XXVIII. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that hath deliberately counted what it may cost him to follow Christ, and to save his soul ; and knowing that suffering with Christ is the way to our reigning with him, he hath fully consented to the terms of Christ. He hath read Luke xiv. 26, 27. 33. and findeth that bearing the cross and forsaking all, is necessary to those that will be Christ's disciples. And accordingly in resolution he hath forsaken all ; and looketh not for a smooth and easy way to heaven. He considereth that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution," and that "through many tribulations we must enter into heaven." And, therefore, he taketh it not for a strange or unexpected thing, if the fiery trial come upon him. He doth not wonder at the unrighteousness of the world, as if he expected reason or honesty, justice or truth, or mercy in the enemies of Christ, and the instruments of Satan : he will not bring his action against the devil, for unjustly afflicting him. He will rather turn the other cheek to him that smiteth him, than he will hinder the good of any soul by seeking right ; much less will he exercise unjust revenge. Though where government is exercised for truth and righteousness, he will not refuse to make use of the justice of it

to punish iniquity, and discourage evil doers, yet this is for God and the common good, and for the suppression of sin, much more than for himself. Suffering doth not surprise him as a thing unlooked for : he hath been long preparing for it, and it findeth him garrisoned in the love of Christ. Yea, though his flesh will be as the flesh of others, sensible of the smart, and his mind is not senseless of the sufferings of his body, yet it is some pleasure and satisfaction to his soul, to find himself in the common way to heaven, and to see the predictions of Christ fulfilled, and to feel himself so far conform to Jesus Christ his head, and to trace the footsteps of a humbled Redeemer in the way before him. As "Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, so doth the Christian arm himself with the same mind ;" 1 Pet. iv. 1. "He rejoiceth that he is made partaker of the sufferings of Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, he may also be partaker of the exceeding joy ;" ver. 12, 13. Yea, he taketh the reproach of Christ for a treasure, yea, a greater treasure than riches, or men's favors can afford ; Heb. xi. 25. 26. For he knoweth if he be reproached for the name or sake of Christ he is happy. For thereby he glorifieth that God, whom the enemy doth blaspheme, and so the Spirit of God and of glory resteth on him ; 1 Pet. iv. 14. He liveth and suffereth as one that from his heart believeth, that "they are blessed that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for great is their reward in heaven. And they are blessed when men shall revile them and persecute them, and say all manner of evil against them falsely for Christ's sake." In this they "rejoice and are exceeding glad," as knowing that herein they are "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise ;" Matt. v. 10—12. Heb. vi. 12. If he be "offered upon the sacrifice and service of the faith of God's elect, he can rejoice in it as having greater good than evil ;" Phil. ii. 17. He can suffer the loss of all things, and account them dung, that he may "win Christ, and be found in him, and know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death ;" Phil. iii. 8—10. Not out of surliness and pride doth he rejoice in sufferings, as some do, that they may carry the reputation of holy and undaunted men ; and seem to be far better, and more constant

than others. When pride maketh men suffer, they are partly the devil's martyrs though the cause be never so good. Though it is much more ordinary for pride to make men suffer rejoicingly in an ill cause than in a good; the devil having more power on his own ground than on Christ's. But it is the love of Christ, and the belief of the reward, and the humble neglect of the mortified flesh, and the contempt of the conquered world, that maketh the Christian suffer with so much joy; for he seeth that the Judge is at the door, and what torments the wicked are preparing for themselves; and that as certainly as there is a God that governeth the world, and that in righteousness, so certainly are his eyes upon the righteous, and his face is set against them that do evil (1 Pet. iii. 12), and though "sinners do evil a hundred times," and escape unpunished till their days be prolonged, yet vengeance will overtake them in due time, and it shall be well with them that fear the Lord; and that he keepeth all the tears of his servants till the reckoning day. And if "judgment begin at the house of God, and the righteous be saved through so much suffering and labor, what then shall be their end, that obey not the Gospel? and where shall the ungodly and sinner appear;" 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Eccles. viii. 12. Prov. xi. 31. xiii. 6. Psal. lvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 35. James v. 9.

2. And the weak Christian is one that will forsake all for the sake of Christ, and suffer with him that he may be glorified with him; and will take his treasure in heaven for all; Luke xiv. 26. 33. xviii. 22. But he doth it not with that easiness, and alacrity, and joy, as the confirmed Christian doth. He hearkens more to the flesh, which saith, 'favor thyself.' Suffering is much more grievous to him; and sometimes he is wavering before he can bring himself fully to resolve, and let go all; Matt. xvi. 22.

3. But the seeming Christian looketh not for much suffering: he reads of it in the Gospel, but he saw no probability of it, and never believed that he should be called to it in any notable degree: he thought it probable that he might well escape it, and therefore, though he agreed verbally to take Christ for better and worse, and to follow him through sufferings, he thought he would never put him to it. And indeed his heart is secretly resolved, that he will never be undone in the world for Christ. Some reparable loss he may undergo,

but he will not let go life and all. He will still be religious and hope for heaven ; but he will make himself believe (and others if he can) that the truth lieth on the safer side, and not on the suffering side ; and that it is but for their own conceits, and scrupulosity, that other men suffer who go beyond him ; and that many good men are of his opinion, and therefore he may be good also in the same opinion (though he would never had been of that opinion, if it had not been necessary to his escaping of sufferings) what flourish soever, he maketh for a time, "when persecution ariseth he is offended and withereth ;" Matt. xiii. 21. 26. Unless he be so deeply engaged among the suffering party, that he cannot come off without perpetual reproach ; and then perhaps pride will make him suffer more than the belief of heaven, or the love of Christ could do. And all this is, because his very belief is unrooted, and unsound, and he hath secretly at the heart a fear, that if he should suffer death for Christ, he should be a loser by him, and he would not reward him according to his promise, with everlasting life ; Heb. iii. 12.

XXIX. 1. A Christian indeed is one that followeth not Christ for company, nor holdeth his belief in trust upon the credit of any in the world, and therefore he would stick to Christ, if all that he knoweth or converseth with should forsake him. If the rulers of the earth should change their religion, and turn against Christ, he would not forsake him. If the multitude of the people turn against him ; nay, if the professors of godliness should fall off, yet would he stand his ground and be still the same. If the most learned men, and the pastors of the church should turn from Christ, he would not forsake him. Yea, if his nearest relations and friends, or even that minister that was the means of his conversion, should change their minds, and forsake the truth, and turn from Christ, or a holy life, he would yet be constant, and be still the same. And what Peter resolved on, he would truly practice : "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet would not I be offended. Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee ;" Matt. xxvi. 33. 35. And if he thought himself, as Elias did, left alone, yet would he not bow the knee to Baal ; Rom. xi. 3. If he hear that this eminent minister falleth off one day, and the other another day, till all be gone, yet still the founda-

tion of God standeth sure ; he falleth not because he is built upon the rock ; Matt. vii. 22, 23. His heart saith, ‘ Alas, whither shall I go, if I go from Christ ? Is there any other that hath the word and Spirit of eternal life ? Can I be a gainer if I lose my soul ? ’ John vi. 67, 68. Matt. xvi. 26. He useth his teachers to bring him that light and evidence of truth, which dwelleth in him when they are gone : and, therefore, though they fall away, he falleth not with them.

2. And the weakest Christian believeth with a divine faith of his own and dependeth more on God than man : but yet if he should be put to so great a trial, as to see all the pastors and Christians that he knoweth, change their minds, I know not what he would do : for though God will uphold all his own, whom he will save, yet he doth it by means and outward helps, together with his internal grace ; and keepeth them from temptations, when he will deliver them from the evil ; and therefore it is a doubt, whether there be not degrees of grace so weak, as would fail, in case the strongest temptations were permitted to assault them. A strong man can stand and go of himself, but an infant must be carried ; and the lame and sick must have others to support them. The weak Christian falleth, if his teacher or most esteemed company fall : if they run into an error, sect or schism, he keeps them company. He groweth cold, if he have not warming company : he forgetteth himself, and letteth loose his sense and passion, if he have not some to watch over him and warn him. No man should refuse the help of others, that can have it ; and the best have need of all God’s means : but the weak Christian needeth them much more than the strong, and is much less able to stand without them ; Luke xxii. 32. Gal. ii. 11—14.

3. But the seeming Christian is built upon the sand, and therefore cannot stand a storm ; he is a Christian more for company, or the credit of man, or the interest that others have in him, or the encouragement of the times, than from a firm belief and love of Christ, and therefore falleth when his props are gone ; Matt. vii. 24.

XXX. 1. A strong Christian can digest the hardest truths, and the hardest works of Providence : he seeth more of the reason and evidence of truths than others ; and he hath usually a more comprehensive knowledge, and can reconcile those truths which short-sight-

ed persons suspect to be inconsistent and contradictory, and when he cannot reconcile them, he knoweth they are reconcilable : for he hath laid his foundation well, and then he reduceth other truths to that, and buildeth them on it. And so he doth by the hardest providences : whoever is high or low, whoever prospereth or is afflicted, however human affairs are carried, and all things seem to go against the church and cause of Christ, he knoweth yet that God is good to Israel, (Psal. lxxiii. 1, 2.) and that he is the "righteous Judge of all the earth;" and that the "righteous shall have dominion in the morning," and "it shall go well with them that fear the Lord;" for he goeth into the sanctuary, and foreseeth the end; Eccles. viii. 11—13. Psal. lxxiii. 17. cxv. 11. 13. xxxi. 19.

2. But the weak Christian is very hard put to it, when he meeteth with difficult passages of Scripture, and when he seeth it "go with the righteous according to the work of the wicked, and with the wicked according to the work of the righteous;" Eccles. viii. 14. Though he is not overturned by such difficulties, yet his foot is ready to slip, and he digesteth them with much perplexity and trouble.

3. But the seeming, unsettled Christian is often overcome by them, and turneth away from Christ, and saith, 'These are hard sayings, or hard providences, who can bear them;' John vi. 60. 66. And thus unbelief thence gathereth matter for its increase.

XXXI. 1. A Christian indeed is one that can exercise all God's graces in conjunction, and in their proper places and proportion, without setting one against another, or neglecting one while he is exercising another. He can be humbled without hindering his thankfulness and joy; and he can be thankful and joyful without hindering his due humility: his knowledge doth not destroy, but quicken his zeal: his wisdom hindereth not, but furthereth his innocency. his faith is a help to his repentance, and his repentance to his faith: his love to himself doth not hinder, but help his love to others; and his love to God is the end of both. He can mourn for the sins of the times, and the calamities of the church, yea, for his own sins and imperfections, and yet rejoice for the mercies which he hath in possession, or in hope. He findeth that piety and charity are necessarily conjunct; and every grace and duty is a help to all the rest. Yea,

he can exercise his graces methodically, which is the comeliness and beauty of his heart and life ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. 16—21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

2. But the weak Christian, though he have every grace, and his obedience is universal, yet can he hardly set himself to any duty, but it hindereth him from some other duty, through the narrowness and weakness of his mind. When he is humbling himself in confession of sin, he can scarce be lively in thankfulness for mercy : when he rejoiceth, it hindereth his humiliation ; he can hardly do one duty without omitting or hindering another : he is either all for joy or all for sorrow ; all for love or all for fear ; and cannot well do many things at once, but is apt to separate the truth and duties which God hath inseparably conjoined.

3. And for the seeming Christian, he exerciseth no grace in sincerity, nor is he universal in his obedience to God ; though he may have the image of every grace and duty.

XXXII. 1. A Christian indeed is more in getting and using his graces, than in inquiring whether he have them : he is very desirous to be assured that he is sincere, but he is more desirous to be so : and he knoweth that even assurance is got more by the exercise and increase of grace, than by bare inquiry whether we have it already : not that he is a neglecter of self-examination, but he oftener asketh ‘ What shall I do to be saved ? ’ than ‘ How shall I know that I shall be saved ? ’

2. But the weak Christian hath more of self, and less of God in his solicitude : and though he be willing to obey the whole law of Christ, yet he is much more solicitous to know that he is out of danger, and shall be saved, than to be fully pleasing unto God ; and therefore proportionably, he is more in inquiring by what marks he may know that he shall be saved, than by what means he may attain more holiness, and what diligence is necessary to his salvation.

3. But the seeming Christian is most careful how to prosper in the world, or please his flesh : and next how he may be sure to escape damnation when he hath done ; and least of all, how he may conform to Christ in holiness.

XXXIII. 1. A Christian indeed doth study duty more than events; and is more careful what he shall be towards God, than what he shall have from God, in this life. He looketh to his own part more than unto God's, as knowing that it is he that is like to fail; but God will never fail of his part: he is much more suspicious of himself than of God; and when any thing goeth amiss, he blameth himself, and not God's providence: he knoweth that the hairs of his head are numbered, and that his Father knoweth what he needeth; and that God is infinitely wiser, and fitter to dispose of him, than he is to choose for himself, and that God loveth him better than he can love himself; and therefore he thankfully accepteth that easy, indulgent command, "Cast all your care on him, for he careth for you. Take no thought what ye shall eat or drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed;" Heb. xii. 15. xiii. v. Job i. 21, 22. Matt. x. 30. vi. 25. 31, 32. 1 Pet. v. 7.

2. But alas! how guilty is the weak Christian of meddling with God's part of the work! How sinfully careful what will become of him, and of his family, and affairs, and of the church, as if he were afraid lest God would prove forgetful, unfaithful, or insufficient for his work! So imperfect is his trust in God.

3. And the seeming Christian really trusteth him not at all, for any thing that he can trust himself or the creature for; he will have two strings to his bow if he can; but it is in man that he placeth his greatest trust for any thing that man can do. Indeed to save his soul he knoweth none but God is to be trusted, and therefore his life is still preferred before his soul; and consequently man whom he trusted most with his life and prosperity, is really trusted before God, however God may have the name; Jer. xvii. 5. 7. Psal. xxxiv. 8. xx. 7. xxxiv. 22. xxxvii. 3.

XXXIV. 1. A Christian indeed is much more studious of his own duty towards others, than of theirs to him; he is much more fearful of doing wrong, than of receiving wrong: he is more troubled if he say ill of others, than if others speak ill of him: he had far rather be slandered himself, than slander others; or be censured himself, than censure others; or be unjustly hurt himself, than unjustly hurt another; or to be put out of his own possessions or right, than to

put another out of his; he is oftener and sharper in judging and reproving himself than others; he falleth out with himself more frequently than with others; and is more troubled with himself than with all the world besides; he taketh himself for his greatest enemy, and knoweth that his danger is most at home; and that if he can escape but from himself, no one in earth or hell can undo him; he is more careful of his duty to his prince, his parents, his pastor, or his master, than of theirs to him; he is much more unwilling to be disobedient to them in any lawful thing, or to dishonor them, than to be oppressed, or unjustly afflicted, or abused by them. And all this is, because he knoweth that sin is worse than present suffering; and that he is not to answer for other men's sins, but for his own; nor shall he be condemned for the sins of any but himself; and that many millions are condemned for wronging others, but no one for being wronged by others: 1 Pet. iv. 12—16. Matt. v. 10—12. 1 Pet. ii. 13. 15—17.

2. And the weak Christian is of the same mind in the main; but with so much imperfection, that he is much more frequent in censuring others, and complaining of their wrongs, and finding fault with them, and aggravating all that is said or done against himself, when he is hardly made so sensible of as great miscarriages in himself, as having much more uncharitableness, partiality, and selfishness, than a confirmed Christian hath. There are few things which weakness of grace doth more ordinarily appear in, than this partiality and selfishness, in judging of the faults or duties of others, and of his own. How apt are (not only hypocrites, but) weak Christians, to aggravate all that is done against them; and to extenuate or justify all that they do against another. O what a noise they make of it, if they think that any one hath wronged them, defamed them, disparaged them, or encroached on their right. If God himself be blasphemed or abused, they can more patiently bear it, and make not so great a matter of it. Who heareth of such angry complaints on God's behalf, as on men's own? Of such passionate invectives, such sharp prosecutions, against those that wrong both God and men's souls, as against those that wrong a selfish person. (And usually every man seemeth to wrong him who keepeth from him any thing

h he would have, or saith any thing of him which is displeasing m.) Go to the assizes and courts of justice ; look into the pris- and inquire whether it be zeal for God, or for men's selves, h is the plaintiff and prosecutor ? and whether it be for wrong- od or them, that all the stir is made ? Men are ready to say, is sufficient to right himself. As if he were not the Original he End of laws and government, and magistrates were not his rs, to promote obedience to him in the world.

this time how universal is men's complaint against their govern- how common are the cries of the poor and sufferers, of the ness of their burdens, miseries, and wants. But how few la- the sins against government, which this land hath been sadly of ! The pastors complain of the people's contempt : the peo- omplain of the pastor's insufficiency and lives. The master laineth how hard it is to get good servants, that will mind their ess and profit as if it were their own : servants complaining of masters for over laboring them or using them too hardly. lords say that their tenants cheat them : and tenants say that landlords oppress and grind them. But if you were Christians d, the most common and sad complaints would be against your- s. 'I am not so good a ruler, so peaceable a subject, so good llord, so good a tenant, so good a master, so good a servant, as ht to be.' Your ruler's sin, your subject's sin, your landlord's our tenant's sin, your master's sin, your servant's sin, shall not arged upon you in judgment, nor condemn you, but your own How much more, therefore, should you complain of your own, of theirs ?

As for the seeming Christian, I have told you already, that sel- ess is his nature and predominant constitution ; and according to atest, he judgeth of almost all things ; of the faults and duties ers and himself. And therefore no man seemeth honest or in- to him, who displeaseth him, and is against his wordly interest. him about mine and thine, and he will beknave the honestest man and call his ancient friend his enemy. But of his dealings them, he is not so scrupulous, nor so censorious of himself.

XXXV. 1. A Christian indeed is much taken up in the government of his thoughts, and hath them so much ordinarily in obedience, that God and his service, and the matters of his salvation have that precedency in them, and his eye is fixed on his end and duty; and his thoughts refuse not to serve him for any work of God to which he calleth them. He suffereth them not to be the inlets or agents for pride, or lust, or envy, or voluptuousness, or to contrive iniquity: but if any such sparks from hell are cast into his thoughts, he presently laboreth to extinguish them. If they intrude, he letteth them not lodge or dwell there. And though he cannot keep out all disorder or vanity, or inordinate delights, yet it is his endeavor, and he leaveth not his heart in any thing to itself.

2. The weak Christian also maketh conscience of his thoughts, and alloweth them not to be the inlets or servants of any reigning sin. But alas, how imperfectly doth he govern them! what a deal of vanity and confusion is in them! how carelessly doth he watch them! how remissly doth he rebuke them, excite them, and command them! how oft are they defiled with impurity and uncharitableness! and how little doth he repent of this, or endeavor to reform it! And little serviceable are his thoughts, to any high and heavenly work, in comparison of the confirmed Christian.

3. And the seeming Christian is very little employed about his thoughts, but leaveth them to be the servants of his pride, and worldliness, or sensuality, or some reigning sin; Psal. x. 4. Matt. xv. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 20. Isa. lv. 7. Jer. iv. 14. vi. 19.

XXXVI. 1. A Christian indeed is much employed in the government of his passions; and hath so far mastered them, as that they prevail not to pervert his judgment, nor to discompose his heart so far as to interrupt much his communion with God, nor to ensnare his heart to any creature, nor to breed any fixed uncharitableness or malice in him, nor to cause his tongue to speak things injurious to God or man, to curse, or swear, or rail, or lie; nor yet to cause him to hurt and injure any in his heart. But when passion would be inordinate, either in delights or desires, or anger, or grief, or fear, or hope, he flieth to his helps to suppress and govern them. (Though fear is more out of man's power than the rest, and therefore ordina-

rily hath less of sin.) He knoweth that Christ hath blessed the meek (Matt. v. 5.) and bids us learn of him "to be meek and lowly;" Matt. xi. 28. 29. And that a "meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price;" 1 Pet. iii. 4. It is, therefore, his care and course to give place to wrath when others are angry; Rom. xii. 18, 19. And "if it be possible, as much as in him lieth, to live, peaceably with all men," (Heb. xii. 14.); yea, to follow peace when it flieth from him; and not when he is reviled, to revile again, nor to threaten or revenge himself on them that injure him; 1 Pet. ii. 21—24. Reason and charity hold the reins, and passion is kept under; yea, it is used holily for God; Ephes. iv. 26. Slow to anger he is in his own cause, and watchful over his anger even in God's cause; Prov. xv. 18. xvi. 32. Ephes. iv. 31. Col. iii. 8.

2. But the weak Christian doth greatly shew his weakness in his unruly passions, (if he have a temper of body disposed to passion): they are oft rising, and not easily kept under; yea, and too often prevail for such unseemly words, as maketh him become a dishonor to his profession. Oft he resolveth, and promiseth, and prayeth for help, and yet the next provocation sheweth how little grace he hath to hold the reins. And his passionate desires, and delights, and love, and sorrows, are oft as unruly as his anger, to the further weakening of his soul. They are like ague fits, that leave the health impaired.

3. And the seeming Christian hath much less power over those passions, which must subserve his carnal mind. For anger it dependeth much upon the temperature of the body; and if that incline him not strongly to it, his credit, or common discretion may suppress it: unless you touch his chiefest carnal interest, and then he will not only be angry, but cruel, malicious, and revengeful. But his carnal love, and desire, and delight, which are placed upon that pleasure, or profit, or honor, which is his idol, are indeed the reigning passions in him. And his grief, and fear, and anger, are but the servants unto these; Acts xxiv. 26. 27.

XXXVII. 1. A Christian indeed is one that keepeth a constant government of his tongue; he knoweth how much duty or sin it will be the instrument of. According to his ability and opportunity he useth it to the service and honor of his Creator, in speaking of his excel-

lencies, his works, and word ; inquiring after the knowledge of him and his will ; instructing others, and pleading for the truth and ways of God, and rebuking the impiety and iniquities of the world, as his place and calling doth allow him. He bridleth his tongue from uttering vanity, filthiness, ribaldry, and foolish and uncomely talk and jests ; from rash and irreverent talk of God, and taking of his name in vain ; from the venting of undigested and uncertain doctrines which may prove erroneous and perilous to men's souls ; from speaking imprudently, unhandsomely, or unseasonably about holy things, so as to expose them to contempt and scorn ; from lying, censuring others without a warrantable ground and call ; from backbiting, slandering, false-accusing, railing and reviling ; malicious, envious, injurious speech, which tendeth to extinguish the love of the hearers to those he speaketh of ; from proud and boasting speeches of himself, much more from swearing, cursing, and blasphemous speech, and opposition to the truths and holy ways of God, or opprobrious speeches, or derision of his servants. And in the government of his tongue, he always beginneth with his heart, that he may understand and love the good which he speaketh of, and may hate the evil which his tongue forbeareth ; and not hypocritically to force his tongue against or without his heart. His tongue doth not run before his heart, but is ruleth by it ; Ephes. iv. 15, 29. 31. v. 3, 4, 6. Psal. xxxvii. 30. xv. 2, 3. Prov. xvi. 13. x. 20. xxi. 23. xviii. 21. xv. 2. 4. Psal. 34. 13. Prov. xxv. 15. 23. xxviii. 23. Matt. xii. 31, 32. 34.

2. But the weak Christian, though his tongue be sincerely subject to the laws of God, yet frequently miscarrieth and blemisheth his soul by the words of his lips, being much oftener than the confirmed Christian, overtaken with words of vanity, meddling, folly, imprudence, uncharitableness, wrath, boasting, venting uncertain or erroneous opinions, &c. so that the unruliness of his tongue is the trouble of his heart, if not also of the family, and all about him.

3. The seeming Christian useth his tongue in the service of his carnal ends, and therefore alloweth it so much unjustice, uncharitableness, falsehood, and other sins, as his carnal interest and designs require ; but the rest perhaps he may suppress, especially if natural

sobriety, good education and prudence do assist him ; and his tongue is always better than his heart ; Prov. x. 32. xix. 5. 9. Psal. l. 20. xii. 3. cxliv. 8. cxx. 2, 3. Prov. xxi. 6, 23.

XXXVIII. 1. The religious discourse of a confirmed Christian is most about the greatest and most necessary matters. Heart-work and heaven-work are the usual employment of his tongue and thoughts ; unprofitable controversies, and hurtful wranglings he abhorreth ; and profitable controversies he manageth sparingly, seasonably, charitably, peaceably, and with caution and sobriety, as knowing that the servant of the Lord must not strive, and that strife of words perverteth the hearers, and hindereth edifying ; 1 Tim. vi. 4—6. iv. 7, 8. 2 Tim. ii. 14—17. 24, 25. His ordinary discourse is about the glorious excellencies, attributes, relations, and works of God ; and the mystery of redemption, the person, office, covenant, and grace of Christ ; the renewing, illuminating, sanctifying works of the Holy Ghost ; the mercies of this life, and that to come ; the duty of man to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator ; the corruption and deceitfulness of the heart ; the methods of the tempter ; the danger of particular temptations ; and the means of our escape, and of our growth in grace ; and how to be profitable to others ; and especially to the church. And if he be called to open any truth which others, understand not, he doth it not proudly, to set up himself as master of a sect, or to draw disciples after him, nor make divisions about it in the church ; but soberly, to the edification of the weak. And though he be ready to defend the truth against perverse gainsayers in due season, yet doth he not turn his ordinary edifying discourse into disputes, or talk of controversies ; nor hath such a proud, pugnacious soul, as to assault every one that he thinks erroneous, as a man that taketh himself for the great champion of the truth.

2. But the weak Christian hath a more unfruitful, wandering tongue and his religious discourse is most about his opinions or party, or some external thing ; as which is the best preacher, or person, or book. Or if he talk of any text of Scripture, or doctrine of religion, it is much of the outside of it ; and his discourse is less feeling, lively, and experimental. Yea, many a time he hindereth the more edifying, savory discourse of others, by such religious discourse as is im-

prudent, impertinent, or turneth them away from the heart and life of the matter in hand. But especially his opinions, and distinct manner of worship, are the chief of his discourse.

3. And for the seeming Christian, though he can affectedly force his tongue to talk of any subject in religion, especially that which he thinks will most honor him in the esteem of the hearers; yet when he speaketh according to the inclination of his heart, his discourse is first about his fleshly interest and concerns, and next to that of the mere externals of religion, as controversies, parties, and the several modes of worship.

XXXIX. 1. A Christian indeed is one that so liveth upon the great substantial matters of religion, as yet not willingly to commit the smallest sin, nor to own the smallest falsehood, nor to renounce or betray the smallest holy truth or duty, for any price that man can offer him. The works of repentance, faith, and love, are his daily business, which take up his greatest care and diligence. Whatever opinions or controversies are afoot, his work is still the same; whatever changes come, his religion changeth not; he placeth not the kingdom of God in meats and drinks, and circumstances and ceremonies, either being for them or against them, but in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And he that in these things serveth Christ, as he is acceptable to God, so is he approved by such a Christian as this, however factious persons may revile him; Rom. xiv. 17, 18. 1—5. 10. The strong Christian can "bear the infirmities of the weak," and not take the course that most pleaseth himself, but that which "pleaseth his neighbor for his good to edification;" Rom. xv. 1—3. The essentials of religion, faith, and love, and obedience, are as bread and drink, the substance of his food. These he meditateth on, and these he practiseth, and according to these he esteemeth of others.

But yet no price can seem sufficient to him, to buy his innocency; nor will he wilfully sin, and say, it is a little one, nor "do evil that good may come by it;" nor offer to God the sacrifice of disobedient fools and then say, 'I knew not that I did evil;' for he knoweth that God will rather have obedience than sacrifice, and that "disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft;" and "he that breaketh one of

the least commands, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of God." And he that teacheth men to sin by the example of his own practice, can little expect to turn them from sin, by his better instructions and exhortations. He that will deliberately sin in a small matter, doth set but a small price on the favor of God and his salvation. Wilful disobedience is odious to God, how small soever the matter be about which it is committed. Who can expect that he should stick at any sin, when his temptation is great, who will considerably commit the least; especially if he will approve and justify it? Therefore the sound Christian will rather forsake his riches, his liberty, his reputation, his friends, and his country, than his conscience; and rather lay down liberty, and life itself, than choose to sin against his God, as knowing that never man gained by his sin; Rom. iii. 8. Eccles. v. 2. 1 Sam. xv. 15. 21—23. Matt. v. 19. The sin that Saul was rejected for seemed but a little thing; nor the sin that Uzzah was slain for; and the service of God, even his sacrifice and his ark, were the pretence for both. The sin of the Bethshemites, of Achan, of Gehazi, of Annanias and Sapphira, which had grievous punishments, would seem but little things to us. And it is a great aggravation of our sin to be chosen, deliberate, justified, and fathered upon God; and to pretend that we do it for his service, for the worshipping of him, or the doing good to others, as if God would own and bless sinful means, or needed a lie to his service or glory: when he hateth all the workers of iniquity (Psal. v. 5.), and requireth only the sacrifices of righteousness; Psal. iv. 5. He abhorreth sacrifice from polluted hands; they are to him as the offering a dog; and he will ask who hath required this at your hand. See Psal. l. 8—14. Isa. i. 9—12, &c. lviii. 1—4, &c. Jer. vi. 19, 20. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord;" Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27. It is not pleasing to him; "all that eat thereof shall be polluted;" Hosea ix. 4. See Isa. lxvi. 1—6. The preaching, the praying, the sacraments of wilful sinners, especially when they choose sin as necessary to his service, are a scorn and mockery put upon the most Holy One: as if your servant should set dung and carrion before you on your table for your food; such offer Christ vinegar and gall to drink.

2. In all this the weakest Christian that is sincere, is of the same mind, saving that in his ordinary course, he useth to place too much of his religion in controversies, and parties, and modes, and ceremonies, (whether being for them or against them,) and allow too great a proportion in his thoughts, and speech, and zeal, and practice ; and hindereth the growth of his grace, by living upon less edifying things, and turning too much from the more substantial nutriment.

3. And the seeming Christians are here of different ways. One sort of them place almost all their religion in Pharisaical observation of little, external, ceremonial matters ; as their washings, and fastings, and tithings, and formalities, and the tradition of the elders ; or in their several opinions, and ways, and parties, which they call, 'being of the true church ;' as if their sect were all the church. But living to God in faith and love, and in a heavenly conversation, and worshipping him in spirit and truth, they are utterly unacquainted with. The other sort are truly void of these essential parts of Christianity, in the life and power, as well as the former. But yet being secretly resolved to take up no more of Christianity than will consist with their worldly prosperity and ends, when any sin seemeth necessary to their preferment or safety in the world, their way is to pretend their high esteem of greater matters, for the swallowing of such a sin as an inconsiderable thing. And then they extol those larger souls that live not upon circumstantial, but upon the great and common truths and duties, and pity those men of narrow principles and spirits, who by unnecessary scrupulosity make sin of that which is no sin, and expose themselves to needless trouble. And they would make themselves and others believe that it is their excellency and wisdom, to be above such trifling scruples. And all is because they never took God and heaven for their all, and therefore are resolved never to loose all for the hopes of heaven ; and therefore to do that, whatever it be, which their worldly interests shall require, and not to be of any religion that will undo them.

And three great pretences are effectual means in this their deceit. One is, because indeed there are a sort of persons that tithe mint and cummin, while they pass by the greatest matters of the law, and that are causelessly scrupulous, and make that to be sin which in-

deed is no sin : and when such a scrupulous people are noted by their weakness, and under dishonor among wiser men, the hypocrite hath a very plausible pretence for his hypocrisy, in seeming only to avoid this ignorant scrupulosity, and taking all for such who judge not his sin to be a thing indifferent.

Another great shelter to the credit and conscience of this hypocrite, is the charity of the best, sincerest Christians, who always judge rigidly of themselves, and gently of others. They would rather die than wilfully choose to commit the smallest sin themselves ; but if they see another commit it, they judge as favorably of it as the case will bear, and hope that he did it not knowingly or wilfully ; for they are bound to hope the best till the worst be evident. This being the upright Christian's case, the hypocrite knoweth that he shall still have a place in the esteem and love of those charitable Christians ; (whose integrity and moderation, maketh their judgments most valuable :) and then for the judgment of God, he will venture on it ; and for the censures of weaker persons, who themselves are censured by the best of their censoriousness, he can easily bear them.

And another covert for the hypocrite in this case, is the different judgments of learned and religious men, who make a controversy of the matter. And what duty or sin is there that is not become a controversy ? Yea, and among men otherwise well esteemed of, (except in the essentials of religion). And if once it be a controversy, whether it be a sin or not, the hypocrite can say, ' I am of the judgment of such and such good and learned men ; they are very judicious, excellent persons ; and we must not judge one another in controverted cases ; though we differ in judgment, we must not differ in affection.' And thus because he hath a shelter for his reputation from the censures of men, by the countenance of such as accompany him in his sin, he is as quiet as if he were secured from the censures of the Almighty.

XL. 1. A Christian indeed is one that highly valueth time ; he abhorreth idleness, and all diversions, which would rob him of his time, and hinder him from his work. He knoweth how much work he hath to do, and of what unspeakable consequence to his soul, (if not also to others.) He knoweth that he hath a soul to save or lose ;

a heaven to win ; a hell to escape ; a death and judgment to prepare for ; many a sin to mortify, and many graces to get, and exercise, and increase ; and many enemies and temptations to evercome ; and that he shall never have more time of trial ; but what is now undone, must be undone for ever. He knoweth how short and hasty time is, and also how uncertain ; and how short many hundred years is to prepare for an everlasting state, if all were spent in greatest diligence : and therefore he wondereth at those miserable souls, that have time to spare, and waste in those fooleries which they call pastimes, even in stage-plays, cards, and dice, and long and tedious feasting, delights, compliments, idleness, and overlong or needless visits or recreations. He marvelleth at the distraction or sottishness of those persons, that can play, and prate, and loiter, and feast away precious hours, as if their poor, unprepared souls had nothing to do, while they stand at the very brink of a dreadful eternity ; and are so fearfully unready as they are. He taketh that person who would cheat him of his time, by any of these forenamed baits, to be worse to him than a thief that would take his purse from him by the highway. O precious time ! how highly doth he value it, when he thinks of his everlasting state, and thinks what haste his death is making, and what reckoning he must make for every moment ; what abundance of work hath he for every hour, which he is grieved that he cannot do ! He hath a calling to follow, and he hath a heart to search, and watch, and study ; and a God to seek and faithfully serve ; and many to do good to ; and abundance of particular duties to perform in order to every one of these. But, alas ! time doth make such haste away, that many things are left undone, and he is afraid lest death will find him very much behindhand : and therefore he is up and doing, as one that hath use for every minute ; and worketh while it is day, because he knoweth that the night is coming when none can work ; John ix. 4. Redeeming time is much of his wisdom and his work ; Eph. v. 16. Col. iv. 5. He had rather labor in the house of correction, than live the swinish life of idle and voluptuous gentlemen, or beggars that live to no higher end, than to live or to please their flesh ; or to live as worldlings, that lose all their lives in the service of a perishing world. He knoweth how precious time will be ere

long, in the eyes of those that now make light of it, and trifle it away as a contemned thing, as if they had too much.

2. The weak Christian is of the same mind in the main : But when it cometh to particular practice, he is like a weak or a weary traveler, that goeth but slowly, and maketh many a stop. Though his face is still heavenwards, he goeth but a little way in a day : he is too easily tempted to idle, or talk, or feast, or play away an hour unlawfully, so it be not his ordinary course, and he do it but seldom. He taketh not the loss of an hour for so great a loss as the confirmed Christian doth : he could sooner be persuaded to live (though not an idle and unprofitable, yet) an easier, less profitable life. The world and the flesh have far more of his hours, than they ought to have ; though his weakness tell him that he hath most need of diligence.

3. But the time of a seeming Christian is most at the service of his fleshly interest ; and for that it is principally employed. And for that he can redeem it, and grudge if it be lost. But as he liveth not to God, so he cannot redeem his time for God. He loseth it even when he seemeth to employ it best ; when he is praying, or otherwise worshipping God, and doing that good which feedeth his false hopes, he is not redeeming his time in all this. While he is sleeping in security, and deluding his soul with a few formal words, and an image of religion, and his time passeth on, and he is hurried away to the dreadful day, and his damnation slumbereth not, 2 Pet. ii. 3. Prov. xx. 4. Matt. xxv. 6—8.

XLI. 1. A Christian indeed is one whose very heart is set upon doing good : as one that is made to be profitable to others, according to his ability and place ; even as the sun is made to shine upon the world ; he could not be content to live idly, or to labor unprofitably, or to get never so much to himself, unless he some way contributed to the good of others. Not that he grudgeth at the smallness of his talents, and lowness or obscurity of his place, for he knoweth that God may dispose his creatures and talents as he please ; and that where much is given, much is required : Matt. xxv. Luke xii. 48. xix. 23. But what his Lord hath trusted him with, he is loath to hide, and willing to improve to his Master's use. He is so far from

thinking that God is beholden to him for his good works, that he taketh it for one of his greatest mercies in the world, that God will use him in doing any good ; and he would take it for a very great suffering to be deprived of such opportunities, or turned out of service, or called to less of that kind of duty. If he were a physician, and denied liberty to practice, or a minister, and denied liberty to preach, it would far more trouble him that he is hindred from doing good, than that he is deprived of any profits, or honors to himself. He doth not only comfort himself with foresight of the reward, but in the very doing of good he findeth so much pleasure, as maketh him think it the most delightful life in the world : and he looketh for most of his receivings from God, in a way of duty ; John. v. 29. Gal. vi. 10. Heb. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

2. But the weak Christian, though he have the same disposition, is far less profitable to the world : he is more for himself, and less able to do good to others : he wanteth either parts, or prudence, or zeal, or strength. Yea, he is oft like the infants, and sick persons of a family, that are not helpful, but troublesome to the rest. They find work for the stronger Christians to bear their infirmities, and watch them, and support and help them. Indeed, as an infant is a comfort to the mother, through the power of her own love, even when she endureth the trouble of its crying and uncleanness ; so weak Christians are a comfort to charitable ministers and people ; we are glad that they are alive ; but sadded often by their distempers ; Rom. xiv. 1. xv. 12.

3. The seeming Christian liveth to himself, and all his good works are done but for himself, to keep up his credit, or quiet his guilty conscience, and deceive himself with the false hopes of a reward, for that which his falseheartedness maketh to be his sin. If he be a man of learning and good parts, he may be very serviceable to the church ; but the thanks of that is due to God, and little to him, who seeketh himself more than God, or the good of others, in all that he doth ; Matt. xxv. 24—26.

XLII. 1. A Christian indeed, doth truly love his neighbor as himself. He is not all for his own commodity : his neighbor's profit or good name, is as his own. He feeleth himself hurt when his neighbor is

hurt: and if his neighbor prosper, he rejoiceth as if he prospered himself. Though his neighbor be not united to him, in the nearest bonds of Christianity or piety, yet he is not disregardful of the common unity of humanity. Love is the very soul of life; Lev. xix. 18. Matt. xix. 19. xxii. 39. Rom. xiii. 9. Gal. v. 14. James ii. 8. Mark x. 21. 1 John iv. 10.

2. But the love that is in weaker Christians, though it be sincere, is weak as they are; and mixed with too much selfishness, and with too much sourness and wrath. Little matters, cause differences and fallings out. When it cometh to MINE and THINE, and their neighbors cross their interest or commodity, or stand in their way when they are seeking any preferment or profit to themselves; you shall see too easily by their sourness and contention, how weak their love is; Matt. xxiv. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 10. Luke xxii. 24.

3. But in the seeming Christian, selfishness is so predominant, that he loveth none but for himself, with any considerable love. All his kindness is from self-love, because men love him, or highly value him, or praise him, or have done him some good turn, or may do him good hereafter, or the like. If he hath any love to any for his own worth, yet self-love can turn all that to hatred, if they seem against him, or cross him in his way: for no man that is a lover of the world and flesh, and carnal self, can ever be a true friend to any other. For he loveth them but for his own ends; and any cross interests will shew the falsehood of his love; 2 Tim. iii. 2—4. Matt. v. 46.

XLIII. 1. A Christian indeed hath a special love to all the godly; such as endeareth his heart unto them; and such as will enable him to visit them, and relieve them in their wants, to his own loss and hazard, according to his ability and opportunity. For the image of God is beautiful and honorable in his eyes: he loveth not them so much as God in them; Christ in them; the Holy Spirit in them. He foreseeth the day when he shall meet them in heaven, and there rejoice in God with them to eternity. He loveth their company and converse, and delighteth in their gracious words and lives. And the converse of ungodly and empty men is a weariness to him (unless in a way of duty, or when he can do them good.) "In his eyes a

vile person is contemned, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord ;” Psal. xv. 4. Other men grieve his soul with their iniquities, while he is delighted with the appearances of God in his holy ones, even the excellent ones on earth ; Psal. xvi. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8. Yea, the infirmities of believers destroy not his love ; for he hath learned of God himself to difference between their abhorred frailties and their predominant grace ; and to love the very infants in the family of Christ. Yea, though they wrong him, or quarrel with him, or censure him in their weakness, he can honor their sincerity, and love them still. And if some of them prove scandalous, and some seeming Christians fall away, or fall into the most odious crimes, he loveth religion nevertheless ; but continueth as high an esteem of piety, and of all that are upright, as he had before ; 1 John iv. 7, 8. 10. John xiii. 34, 35. 1 Thess. iv. 9. 1 John iii. 11. 14. 23. Matt. xxv. 39, 40, &c.

2. The weak Christian sincerely loveth all that bear his father’s image ; but it is with a love so weak (even when it is most passionate) as will sooner be abated or interrupted by any tempting differences. He is usually quarrelsome and froward with his brethren, and apter to confine his love to those that are of his own opinion or party. And because God hath taught him to love all that are sincere, the devil tempteth him to censure them as not sincere, that so he may justify himself in the abatement of his love. And weak Christians are usually the most censorious, because they have the smallest degree of love, which covereth faults, and thinketh no evil, and is not suspicious, but ever apt to judge the best, till the worst be evident ; 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. “It beareth all things, believeth all things (that are credible,) hopeth all things, endureth all things ;” ver. 7. But it is no wonder to see children fall out, even about their childish toys and trifles ; and what the dissensions of the children of the church have done against themselves in these kingdoms, I need not, I delight not, to record. See 1 Cor. iii. 1—4. “And I brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat ; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able : for ye are yet carnal : for whereas there is among you, envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men ?”

3. The seeming Christian may have some love to real Christians, even for their goodness' sake ; but it is a love subservient to his carnal self-love ; and, therefore, it shall not cost him much. As he hath some love to Christ, so he may have some love to Christians ; but he hath more to the world and fleshly pleasures ; and, therefore, all his love to Christ or Christians, will not make him leave his worldly happiness for them. And, therefore, Christ, at the day of judgment, will not inquire after empty, barren love, but after that love which visited and relieved suffering saints. A hypocrite can allow both Christ and Christians such a cheap, superficial kind of love, as will cost him little. He will bid them lovingly, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled ;" James ii. 15—17. But still the world is most beloved.

XLIV. 1. A Christian indeed, doth love his enemies, and forgive those that injure him, and this out of a thankful sense of that grace which forgave him a far greater debt. Not that he thinketh it unlawful to make use of the justice of the government which he is under, for his necessary protection, or for the restraint of men's abuse and violence. Nor is he bound to love the malice or injury, though he must love the man. Nor can he forgive a crime as it is against God or the common good, or against another, though he can forgive an injury or debt that is his own. Nor is he bound to forgive every debt, though he is bound so far to forgive every wrong as heartily to desire the good of him that did it. Even God's enemies he so far loveth, as to desire God to convert and pardon them, while he hateth their sin, and hateth them as God's enemies, and desireth their restraint ; Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. ci. 3. cxix. 4. lxxviii. 1. xxi. 8. But those that hate, and curse, and persecute himself, he can unfeignedly love, and bless, and pray for ; Matt. v. 43—48. For he knoweth that else he cannot be a child of God ; ver. 45. And that to love those that love him is not much praiseworthy, being no more than heathens and wicked men can do ; ver. 46, 47. He is so deeply sensible of that wondrous love which so dearly redeemed him, and saved him from hell, and forgave him a thousandfold worse than the worst that ever was done against himself, that thankfulness and imita-

tion, or conformity to Christ in his great compassions, do overcome his desires of revenge, and make him willing to do good to his most cruel enemies, and pray for them as Christ and Stephen did at their deaths; Luke xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60. And he knoweth that he is so inconsiderable a worm, that a wrong done to him as such, is the less considerable; and he knoweth that he daily wrongeth God, more than any man can wrong him, and that he can hope for pardon, but on condition that he himself forgive; Matt. vi. 12. 14, 15. xviii. 34, 35. And that he is far more hurtful to himself, than any other can be to him.

2. And the weak Christian can truly love an enemy, and forgive a wrong; but he doth it not so easily and so fully as the other. But it is with much striving, and some unwillingness and averseness; and there remaineth some grudge or strangeness upon the mind. He doth not sufficiently forget the wrong which he doth forgive. Indeed, his forgiving is very imperfect, like himself (Matt. xviii. 21. Luke ix. 54, 55.), not with that freeness and readiness required. "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;" Eph. iv. 2. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye;" Col. iii. 13. 18. "Avenge not yourselves," &c. Rom. xii. 14. 19.

3. As for the seeming Christian, he can seem to forgive wrongs for the sake of Christ, but if he do it indeed it is for his own sake: as because it is for his honor, or because the person hath humbled himself to him, or his commodity requireth it, or he can make use of his love and service for his advantage, or some one hath interposed for reconciliation who must not be denied, or the like. But to love an enemy indeed, and to love that man (be he never so good) who standeth in the way of his preferment, honor or commodity in the world, he never doth it from his heart, whatever he may seem to do; Matt. vi. 14, 15. xviii. 27. 30. 32. The love of Christ doth not constrain him.

XLV. 1. A Christian indeed, is as precise in the justice of his dealings with men, as in acts of piety to God. For he knoweth that

God requireth this as strictly at his hands. "That no man go beyond, or defraud his brother in any matter ; for the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forwarned and testified ;" 1 Thess. iv. 6. He is one that "walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart, that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. If he swear to his own hurt, he changeth not. He putteth not out his money to (unjust or unmerciful) usury ; nor taketh reward against the innocent ; Psal. xv. He obeyeth that, Lev. xix. 13. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him : the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." He can say as Samuel, "Whose ox or ass have I taken ? or whom have I defrauded ? Whom have I oppressed ? or of whose hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will restore it ? And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken out of any man's hand ;" 1 Sam. xii. And if heretofore he was ever guilty of defrauding any, he is willing to his power to make restitution ; and saith as Zaccheus, "If I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold ;" Luke xix. 8. Though flesh and blood persuade him to the contrary, and though it leave him in want, he will pay his debts, and make restitution of that which is ill gotten, as being none of his own. He will not sell for as much as he can get, but for as much as it is truly worth : he will not take advantage of the weakness, or ignorance, or necessity of his neighbor : he knoweth that "a false balance is abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight ;" Prov. xi. 1. He is afraid of believing ill reports, and rebuketh the backbiter ; chap. xxv. 23. He is apt to take part with any man behind his back, who is not notoriously inexcusable ; not to justify any evil, but to shew his charity, and his hatred of evil speaking, especially where it can do no good. He will not believe evil of another till the evidence do compel him to believe it. If he have wronged any by incautious words, he readily confesseth his fault to him, and asketh him forgiveness, and is ready to make any just satisfaction for any wrong that he hath done him. He borroweth not when he seeth not a great probability that he is likely to pay it.

Nor will remain in debt by retaining that which is another man's against his will, without an absolute necessity. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another;" Rom. xiii. 8. For to borrow when he cannot pay is but to steal. Begging is better than borrowing for such. "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not;" Psal. xxxvii. 21.

2. And the weak Christian maketh conscience of justice as well as acts of piety, as knowing that God hath no need of our sacrifices, but loveth to see us do that which is good for human society, and which we have need of from each other. But yet he hath more selfishness and partiality than the confirmed Christian hath, and therefore is often overcome by temptations to unrighteous things: as to stretch his conscience for his commodity, in buying or selling, and concealing the faults of what he selleth, and sometimes overreaching others. Especially he is ordinarily too censorious of others, and apt to be credulous of evil reports, and to be over bold and forward of speaking ill of men behind their backs, and without a call; especially against persons that differ from him in matters of religion, where he is usually most unjust and apt to go beyond his bounds; James iii. 15. 16. Tit. iii. 2. Eph. iv. 31. 1 Pet. ii. 1.

3. The seeming Christian may have a seeming justice; but really he hath none but what must give place to his fleshly interest; and if his honor, and commodity and safety require it, he will not stick to be unjust. And that justice which wanteth but a strong temptation to overturn it, is almost as bad as none. If he will not seize on Naboth's vineyard, nor make himself odious by oppression or deceit, yet if he can raise or enrich himself by secret cozenage, and get so fair a pretence for his injustice, as shall cloak the matter from the sight of men, he seldom sticketh at it. It is an easy matter to make an Achan think that he doth no harm, or a Gehazi that he wrongeth no man, in taking that which was offered and due. Covetousness will not confess its name; but will find some reasonings to make good all the injustice which it doth; 1 Tim. vi. 5. 2 Kings v. 19, 20.

XLVI. 1. A Christian indeed is faithful and laborious in his particular calling, and that not out of a covetous mind; but in obedience to God, and that he may maintain his family, and be able to do good to others. For God hath said, "In the sweat of thy face thou

shalt eat thy bread ;” Gen. iii. 19. “ And six days shalt thou labor ;” Exod. xx. 10. And with quietness men must work, and eat their own bread ; and “ if any will not work, neither should he eat ;” 2 Thess. iii. 10—12. Abraham, and Noah, and Adam, labored in a constant course of employment. He knoweth that a sanctified calling and labor is a help, and not a hindrance to devotion ; and that the body must have work as well as the soul, and religion must not be pretended for slothful idleness, nor against obedience to our Master’s will ; Prov. xxxi.

2. The weak Christian is here more easily deceived, and made believe that religion will excuse a man from bodily labor ; and under the color of devotion to live idly. “ They learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not ; 2 Thess. iii. 8. 1 Tim. v. 13. Slothfulness is a sin much condemned in the Scriptures ; Ezek. xvi. 49. Prov. xxiv. 30. xviii. 9. xxi. 25. Matt. xxv. 26. Rom. xii. 11.

3. The seeming Christian in his labor is ruled chiefly by his flesh. If he be rich, and it inclines him most to sloth, he maketh small conscience of living in idleness, under the pretence of his gentility or wealth. But if the flesh incline him more to covetousness, he will be laborious enough ; but it shall not be to please God by obedience, but to increase his estate, and enrich himself and his posterity, whatever better reason he pretend.

XLVII. 1. A Christian indeed is exactly conscionable in the duties of his relation to others in the family and place of his abode. If he be a husband, he is loving and patient, and faithful to his wife ; if he be a father, he is careful of the holy education of his children ; if he be a master, he is just and merciful to his servants, and careful for the saving of their souls ; if he be a child or servant, he is obedient, trusty, diligent, and careful, as well behind his parent’s or his master’s back, as before his face. He dare not lie, nor steal, nor deceive, nor neglect his duty, nor speak dishonorably of his superiors, though he were sure he could conceal it all. For he knoweth that the fifth commandment is enforced with a special promise ; Eph. vi. 2. 5. 9. And that a bad child, or a bad servant, a bad

husband or wife, a bad parent or master, cannot be a good Christian; Col. iii. 18, 19, &c. iv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 18.

2. But weak Christians, though sincere, are ordinarily weak in this part of their duty; and apt to yield to temptations, and carry themselves proudly, stubbornly, idly, disobediently, as eye-servants that are good in sight; or to be unmerciful to inferiors, and neglecters of their souls. And to excuse all this from the faults of those that they have to do with, and lay all upon others; as if the fault of husband, wife, parent, master, or servant, would justify them in theirs; and passion and partiality would serve for innocence.

3. And the hypocrite ordinarily sheweth his hypocrisies by being false in his relations to man, while he pretendeth to be pious and obedient unto God. He is a bad master, and a bad servant, when his filthy interest requireth it, and yet thinketh himself a good Christian for all that. For all men being faulty, it is easy to find a pretence from all men that he doth abuse, to cover the injury of his abuse. Cain, Ham, Eli, Absalom, Judas, &c. are sad examples of this.

XLVIII. 1. A Christian indeed, is the best subject, whether his prince be good or bad: though by infidel and ungodly rulers he be oft mistaken for the worst. He obeyeth not his rulers only for his own ends, but in obedience to God; and not only for fear of punishment, but for conscience sake. He looketh on them in their relations as the officers of God, and armed with his authority, and therefore obeyeth God in them. He permitteth not dishonorable thoughts of them in his heart; much less dare he speak dishonorably of them; Exod. xii. Prov. xxiv. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 17. Prov. viii. 15. Acts xxiii. 4, 5. Eccles. x. 4, 20. He knoweth that every soul must be subject to the higher powers, and not resist; and that there is no power but of God. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and he that resisteth shall receive to himself damnation;" Rom. xiii. 1—6. Therefore in all things lawful he obeyeth them. And though he must not, nor will not obey them against God, yet will he suffer patiently when he is wronged by them; and not only forbear resistance by arms or violence, but also all reproachful words, as knowing that the righting of himself is not so necessary to the public order and good, as the honor of his rulers

is. Usurpers may probably charge him to be a traitor, and seditious and rebellious, because he dare not approve of their usurpations ; and when several are contending for the government, and in a litigious title the lawyers mislead him, when the controversy is only among them, and belongs to their profession, it is possible he may mistake as well as the lawyers, and take him to have the better title that hath the worse. But in divinity he knoweth there is no controversy whether every soul must be subject to the highest power, so far as he can know it. And that prayer and patience are the subject's arms ; and religion is so far from being a warrant to resist, that it plainly forbiddeth disobedience and resistance ; and none are more obliged to submission and quietness than Christians are. The spirit of Christianity is not of this world ; their kingdom and their hopes are not of this world ; and, therefore, they contend not for dignities and rule ; much less by resisting or rebelling against their lawful governors. But they are resolved to obey God, and secure their everlasting portion, and bear all the injuries which they meet with in the way, especially from those whom God hath set over them. There is no doctrine that ever was received in the world, so far from befriending seditions and rebellion, as the doctrine of Christ ; nor any people in the world so loyal as Christians, while Christianity retained its genuine simplicity ; till proud, domineering, worldly men, for carnal ends, pretended themselves to be Christians, and perverted the doctrine of Christ, to make it warp to their ambitious ends. Suffering seemeth not so great a matter to a holy, mortified, heavenly mind, as to tempt him to hazard his salvation to resist it. No man is so likely to be true to kings, as he that believeth that his salvation lieth on it, by the ordinance of God ; Rom. xiii. 3. And princes that are wise and just, do always discern that the best Christians are their best subjects ; though those that are unbelieving and ungodly themselves, have ever hated them as the greatest troubles of the earth. And it hath ever been the practice of the enemies of Christ and godliness, to do all they can to engage the rulers of the earth against them ; and to persuade them that the most godly Christians are persons of disloyal and unquiet minds ; and by vexing and persecuting them, they do their worst to make them such as they falsely called

them. Even Christ himself was crucified as an enemy to Cæsar, and Pilate driven to it by the noise of them that cried out, that if he let them go he was not Cæsar's friend : John xix. 12. They first tempted him with the question, "Whether it were lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar;" Matt. xxii. 17. Luke xx. 22. And though they could this way take no hold of him, yet this was the first article of his accusation : "We have found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar:" Luke xxiii. 2. And how loyal would those rebellious Jews seem, when they thought it the only way to engage the Roman power against Christ? Then they cry out, "We have no king but Cæsar;" John xix. 15. And this was the common accusation against the Christians both by Jews and Gentiles. The language of the Jews you may hear from Tertullus : "We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;" Acts xxiv. 5. And at Thessalonica, the charge against them was, that they "turned the world upside down, and did all contrary to the decrees of Cæsar;" chap. xvii. 6, 7. And thus the best Christians have by such been slandered from age to age; because the devil and his instruments know not how sufficiently to molest them, except they engage the rulers against them. But yet all this doth not conquer the patience and loyalty of confirmed Christians. They are wiser than that wise man that Solomon saith, "Oppression maketh mad;" Eccles. vii. 7. If usurpers or malicious liars shall a thousand times call them rebellious and seditious, it shall not drive them from their due subjection. They can patiently follow their Lord and the ancient Christians, in the enduring of such slanders, and suffering as enemies to Cæsar, so they do but escape the sin, and be not such as malice calleth them. They had rather die as reputed enemies to government, than to be such indeed. They prefer subjection before the reputation of it; for they look not for their reward from princes, but from God. If they can preserve their innocence, they can bear the defamation of their names, being satisfied in the hopes of the joyful day of the judgment of Christ, which will fully justify them and set all straight. Indeed they know that a state of subjection is easier and safer than places of command;

and that it is easier to obey than govern. And so far are they from envying men's greatness, and from desiring dominions, that they pity the tempted, and dangerous, and troublesome state of those in power, and are thankful to God for their quieter and safer station. They heartily pray for kings and all that are in authority; not that by their favor they may rise to places of wealth and honor, but "that under them they may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty; 1 Tim. ii. 2. Yea, though infidel princes hate and persecute them, they continue to pray for them, and to honor their authority, and will not thereby be driven from their duty. If God cast their lot under infidel, ungodly, and malicious governors, they do not run to arms to save themselves, or save the Gospel; as if God had called them to reform the world, or keep it from the oppression of the higher powers. Nor do they think it a strange, intolerable matter for the best men to be lowest, and to be the suffering side, and so fall to fighting that Christ and the saints may have the rule. For they know that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, (John xviii. 36.); that is not a visible monarchy, as his usurping vicar doth pretend; and that Christ doth most eminently rule unseen, and disposeth of all the kingdoms of the world, even where he is hated and resisted; and that the reign of saints is in their state of glory; and that all God's graces do fit them more for a suffering life, than for worldly power. Their humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, contempt of the world, and heavenly mindedness, are better exercised and promoted in a suffering, than a prosperous, reigning state. When they think of the holy blood which hath been shed by heathen Rome, from Christ and Stephen, till the days of Constantine; and the far greater streams which have been shed by the bloody papal Rome; wherever they had power, in Piedmont, Germany, Poland, Hungary, in Belgia, England, and in other lands; the thirty or forty thousand murdered in a few days at the Bartholomew massacre in France; the two hundred thousand murdered in a few weeks in Ireland, they are not so unlike their suffering brethren, as to think that striving for honors and command, is their way to heaven. When Christ hath foretold them that self-denial under the cross, tribulation, and persecution, is the common way; (Luke xiv. 26, 27. 29. 33. Acts xiv. 22. John xvi. 33.

Rom. v. 3. viii. 35. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Matt. v. 10—12. 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7. 10. Mark x. 30.)—so far are they from fighting against the injuries and cruelties of their governors, that they account the reproach of Christ to be greater riches than all their treasures, (Heb. xi. 25, 26.), and think they are blessed when they are persecuted (Matt. v. 10.), and say with Paul, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world;” Gal. vi. 14. And 2 Cor. xii. 19. “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong.” “Nay, in all these things, when persecuted and killed all the day long, and counted as sheep to the slaughter, they are more than conquerors through Christ;” Rom. viii. 35—37. They obtain a nobler conquest than that which is obtained by the sword.

2. But the weak Christian having less patience, and more selfishness and passion, is more easily tempted to break his bounds, and with Peter run to his unauthorized sword, when he should submit to suffering; Matt. xxvi. 51, 52. And his interest and sufferings cause his passions to have too great a power on his judgment, so that he is more easily tempted to believe that to be lawful which he thinks to be necessary to his own preservation; and to think that the Gospel and the church are falling, when the power of men is turned against them; and therefore he must with Uzzah put forth his hand to save the ark of God from falling. He is more troubled at men’s injustice and cruelty, and maketh a wonder of it, to find the enemies of Christ and godliness to be unreasonably impudent and bloody; as if he expected reason and righteousness in the malicious world. His sufferings fill him more with discontent, and desires of revenge from God; Luke ix. 54. and his prosperity too much lifts him up; 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. And in the litigious titles of pretenders to supremacy, he is oft too hasty to interest himself in their contentions, as if he understood not that whoever is the conqueror will count those rebels that were on the other side; and that the enemies of Christ will cast all the odium upon Christianity and piety, when the controversy is only among the statesmen and lawyers, and belongs not to religion at all.

3. The seeming Christian will seem to excel all others in loyalty and obedience, when it maketh for his carnal ends: he will flatter rulers for honors and preferment, and always be on the rising side, unless when his pride engageth him in murmurings and rebellions. He hath a great advantage above true Christians and honest men, to seem the most obedient subject; because he hath a stretching conscience, that can do any thing for his safety or his worldly ends. If he be among the Papists, he can be a Papist; if among Protestants, he is a Protestant; and if he were among Turks, it is likely he would rather turn a Mahometan than be undone. No prince or power can command him any thing which he cannot yield to, if his worldly interest require it. If there be a law for worshipping the golden image, it is the conscionable servants of God, and not the time-servers, that refuse to obey it; Dan. iii. If there be a law against praying, (Dan. vi.) it is Daniel, and not the ungodly multitude that disobey it. If there be a command against preaching, (Acts iv. 17, 18.) it is the holy apostles and best Christians that plead the command of God against it, and refuse obedience to it; (ver. 20. 29.) The self-seeking, temporizing hypocrite can do any thing; and yet he obeyeth not, while he seemeth to obey: for it is not for the authority of the commander that he doth it, but for his own ends. He never truly honoreth his superiors; for he doth not respect them as the officers of God, nor obey them for his sake with a conscionable obedience. He feareth the higher powers as bears or tigers, that are able to hurt him; or useth their favor as he useth his horse, to do him service. Were it not for himself, he would little regard them. The true Christian honoreth the basest creature more than the hypocrite and worldling honoreth his king: for he seeth God in all, and useth the smallest things unto his glory; whereas the worldling debaseth the highest, by the baseness of his esteem, and use, and end: for he knoweth not how to esteem or use the greatest prince, but for himself or for some worldly ends; 2 Tim. iii. 3, 4.

XLIX. 1. A Christian indeed is a man of courage and fortitude in every cause of God; for he trusteth God, and firmly believeth that he will bear him out. He knoweth his superiors, and hath a charitable respect to all men: but as for any selfish or timorous respect, he

hath the least regard to man. For he knoweth that the greatest are but worms, whose breath is in their nostrils, that pass away as shadows, and return to dust; and that the most potent are impotent when they contend with God, and are unequal matches to strive against their Maker; and that it will prove hard for them to kick against the pricks; and that whoever seemeth now to have the day, it is God that will be conqueror at last. Job xxv. 6. xvii. 14. xxiv. 20. Psal. lxxix. 31. ciii. 16. cxliv. 3—5. Acts ix. 4—6. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God." "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker;" Isa. xlv. 9. He knoweth that it is more irrational to fear man against God, than to fear a flea or a fly against the greatest man. The infinite disproportion between the creature that is against him, and the Creator that is for him, doth resolve him to obey the command of Christ; "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you fear him;" Luke xii. 4. "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness the people in whose heart is my law: fear ye not the reproof of man, neither be afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation;" Isa. lvii. 7, 8. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint; and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together; who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo! they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up;" Isa. l. 6—9. xxxv. 4. xli. 10. 13, 14. vii. 4. Jer. xli. 27, 28. Matt. x. 26. 31. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nos-

trils ; for wherein is he to be accounted of ;" Isa. ii. 22. " Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, &c. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, &c." Jer. xvii. 5. 8, 9. Alas, how terrible is the wrath of God, in comparison of the wrath of man ! And how easy an enemy is the cruellest afflicter, in comparison of a holy, sin-revenging God. Therefore the confirmed Christian saith as the three witnesses ; Dan. iii. 16—18. " We are not careful to answer thee in this matter : the God whom we serve is able to deliver us.—But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." When Daniel knew that the decree was past, he prayed openly in his house, as heretofore ; Dan. vi. 10. Moses " feared not the wrath of the king ; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible ;" Heb. xi. 27. " The righteous are bold as a lion ;" Prov. xxviii. 1. " When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they marveled ;" Acts iv. 13. Paul's bonds made others bold ; 2 Cor. xi. 21. Ephes. vi. 19, 20. Acts iv. 29. 31. " Perfect love casteth out fear ;" 1 John iv. 18. " If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye ; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled ;" 1 Pet. iii. 14. " So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me ;" Heb. xiii. 6.

2. But the weak Christian, though he also trust in God, is much more fearful, and easily daunted and discouraged ; and ready with Peter to be afraid, if he perceive himself in danger ; Matt. xxvi. 69. He is not " valiant for the truth ;" Jer. ix. 3. Though he can forsake all (even life itself) for Christ, (Luke xiv. 26. 33.) yet it is with a deal of fear and trouble. And man is a more significant thing to him than to the stronger Christian.

3. But the seeming Christian doth fear man more than God, and will venture upon the displeasure of God, to avoid the displeasure of men that can do him hurt ; because he doth not soundly believe the threatenings of the word of God.

L. 1. A Christian indeed is made up of judgment and zeal conjunct. His judgment is not a patron of lukewarmness, nor his zeal an enemy to knowledge. His judgment doth not destroy, but increase his zeal ; and his zeal is not blind nor self-conceited, nor doth

run before, or without judgment. If he be of the most excellent sort of Christians, he hath so large a knowledge of the mysteries of godliness, that he seeth the body of sacred truth with its parts, and compages, or joints, as it were at once. It is all written deeply and methodically in his understanding; he hath by long use his senses exercised, to discern both good and evil; Heb. v. 14. He presently discerneth where mistaken men go out of the way, and lose the truth, by false suppositions, or by false definitions, or by confounding things that differ. And therefore he pitieth the contentious sects and disputers, who raise a dust to blind themselves and others, and make a stir to the trouble of the church, about things, which they never understood: and in the sight of that truth which others obscure and contradict, he enjoyeth much content or pleasure in his own mind, though incapable persons zealously reject it. Therefore he is steadfast, as knowing on what ground he setteth his foot. And though he be the greatest lover of truth, and would with greatest joy receive any addition to his knowledge, yet ordinarily by erroneous zealots he is censured as too stiff and self-conceited, and tenacious of his own opinions, because he will not entertain their errors, and obey them in their self-conceitedness. For he that knoweth that it is a truth which he holdeth, is neither able nor willing to hold the contrary, (unless he imprison the truth in unrighteousness.) But if he be one that hath not attained to such a clear, comprehensive judgment, yet with that measure of judgment which he hath, he doth guide and regulate his zeal, and maketh it follow after, while understanding goeth before. He treadeth on sure ground, and knoweth it to be duty indeed which he is zealous for, and sin indeed which he is zealous against; and is not put to excuse all his favor and forwardness after, with a 'non putarem,' or, 'I had thought it had been otherwise;' 1 Cor. i. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 7. Col. iii. 16. iv. 12.

2. But the weak Christian either hearkeneth too much to carnal wisdom, which suppresseth his zeal, and maketh him too heavy, and dull, and indifferent in many of his duties, and the concernments of his soul, permitting the world to take up too much of the vigor of his spirit; or else he is confident in his mistakes, and verily thinks that he understandeth better than many wiser men, those things which

he never understood at all. He chooseth his party, by the zeal that he findeth in them, without any judicious trial of the truth of what they hold and teach. He is very earnest for many a supposed truth and duty, which proveth at last to be no truth or duty at all: and he censureth many a wiser Christian than himself, for many a supposed sin, which is no sin, but perhaps a duty. For he is always injudicious, and his heat is greater than his light, or else his light is too flashy without heat. Peremptorily he doth set down some among the number of the most wise and excellent men, for keeping him company in his mistakes; and he boldly numbereth the best and wisest of his teachers with the transgressors, for being of a sounder understanding than himself, and doing those duties which he calleth sins. And hence it is that he is a person apt to be misled by appearances of zeal; and the passions of his teachers prevail more with him than the evidence of truth. He that prayeth and preacheth most fervently is the man that carrieth him away, though none of his arguments should be truly cogent. If he hear any hard name against any opinion, or manner of worship, he receiveth that prejudice which turneth him more against it than reason could have done. So the bugbear names of Heresy, Lutheranism, and Calvinism, frighteneth many a well-meaning Papist both from the truth, and almost from his wits. And the names of Popery, Arminianism, Prelacy, Presbyterianism, Independency, &c. do turn away the hearts of many from things which they never tried or understood. If a zealous preacher do but call any opinion or practice antichristian or idolatrous, it is a more effectual terror than the clearest proof. Big and terrible words do move the passions, while the understanding is abused, or a stranger to the cause. And passion is much of their religion. And hence, alas! is much of the calamity of the church; Rom. xiv. 1—4, &c. 1 Cor. iii. 1—4. Acts xxi. 20. Gal. iv. 17, 18.

3. But the seeming Christian is only zealous finally for himself, or zealous about the smaller matters of religion, as the Pharisees were for their ceremonies and traditions, or for his own inventions, or some opinions or ways, in which his honor seemeth to be interested, and pride is the bellows of his zeal. But as for a holy zeal about the substance and practice of religion, and that for God as the final

cause, he is a stranger to it. He may have a zeal of God, and of and for the law and worship of God as the material cause, but not a true zeal for God, as the chief final cause; Rom. x. 2. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 2 Kings x. 16. Acts xxii. 3.

LI. 1. A Christian indeed can bear the infirmities of the weak: though he love not their weakness, yet he pitieth it, because he truly loveth their persons. Christ hath taught him not to break the bruised reed, and to "gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young;" Isa. xl. 11. xlii. 3. If they have diseases and distempers, he seeketh in tenderness to cure them, and not in wrath to hurt or vex them. He turneth not the infants or sick persons from the family, because they cry, or are unquiet, unclean, infirm, and troublesome; but he exerciseth his love and pity upon their weaknesses. If they mistake their way, or are ignorant, and peevish, and froward in their mistakes, he seeketh not to undo them, but gently to reduce them. If they censure him, and call him erroneous, heretical, antichristian, idolatrous, because he concurrereth not with them in their mistakes, he beareth it with love and patience, as he would do the peevish chidings of a child, or the frowardness of the sick. He doth not lose his charity, and set his wit against a child, and aggravate the crimes, and being reviled revile again; and say 'You are schismatics, hypocrites, obstinate, and fit to be severely dealt with.' But he overcometh them with love and patience, which is the conquest of a saint, and the happiest victory both for himself and them. It is a "small matter to him to be judged of man;" 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. He is more troubled for the weakness and disease of the censorious, than for his own being wronged by their censures; Phil. i. 16—18. Rom. xv. 1—3. xiv. 2, 3.

2. But the weak Christian is more ready to censure others, than patiently to bear a censure himself. Either he stormeth against the censurers, as if they did him some unsufferable wrong (through the over-great esteem of himself and his reputation), or else, to escape the fangs of censure, and keep up his repute with them, he complieth with the censorious, and overruns his judgment and conscience to be well-spoken of and counted a sincere and steadfast man; Gal. ii. 12—14.


3. But the seeming Christian is so proud and selfish, and wanteth charity and tenderness to the weak, that he is impatient of their provocations; and would cure the diseases of the servants of Christ, by cutting their throats, or ridding the country of them. If a child do but wrangle with him, he crieth, 'Away with him, he is a troubler of the world.' He taketh more notice of one of their infirmities, than of all their graces; yea, he can see nothing but obstinacy and hypocrisy in them, if they do but cross him in his opinions, or reputation, or worldly ends. Selfishness can turn his hypocrisy into malignity and cruelty, if once he take them to be against his interest. Indeed his interest can make him patient: he can bear with them that he looketh to gain by, but not with them that seem to be against him. The radical enmity against sincerity, that was not mortified, but covered in his heart, will easily be again uncovered; Mark vi. 18. 20—22. Phil. i. 15, 16. 3 John 9.

LII. 1. A Christian indeed is a great esteemer of the unity of the church, and greatly averse to all divisions among believers. As there is in the natural body an abhorring of dismembering or separating any part from the whole; so there is in the mystical body of Christ. The members that have life, cannot but feel the smart of any distempering attempt; for abscision is destruction; the members die that are separated from the body. And if there be but any obstruction or hindrance of communion, they will be painful or unuseful. He feeleth in himself the reason of all those strict commands, and earnest exhortations: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment;" 1 Cor. i. 10. "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" Phil. ii. 1—4. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, that ye walk worthy of

the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ:" Ephes. iv. 2—7. Read also chap. iv. 12—16. 1 Cor. xii. throughout. He looketh at uncharitableness, and divisions, with more abhorrence than weak Christians do at drunkenness or whoredom, or such other heinous sin. He feareth such dreadful warnings, as Acts xx. 29, 30. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." And he cannot slight such a vehement exhortation, as Rom. xvi. 17, 18. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words, and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple." Therefore he is so far from being a divider himself, that when he seeth any one making divisions among Christians, he looketh on him as one that is slashing and mangling the body of his dearest friend, or as one that is setting fire on his house, and therefore doth all that he can to quench it; as knowing the confusion and calamity to which it tendeth. He is of a Christian, and therefore of a truly catholic spirit; that is, he maketh not himself a member of a divided party, or a sect; he regardeth the interest and welfare of the body, the universal church, above the interest or prosperity of any party whatsoever; and he will do nothing for a party which is injurious to the whole, or to the Christian cause. The very names of sects and parties are displeasing to him; and he could wish that there were no name but that of Christians among us, save only the necessary names of the criminal, (such as that of the Nicolaitans; Rev. ii. 6. 15.) by which those that are to be avoided by Christians must be known. Christianity is confined to so narrow a compass in the world, that he

is unwilling to contract it yet into a narrower. The greatest party of divided Christians, whether it be the Greeks or Papists, is too small a body for him to take for the catholic, or universal church. He admireth at the blindness and cruelty of faction, that can make men damn all the rest of the church for the interest of their proper sect; and take all those as no Christians that are better Christians than themselves. Especially the Papists, who unchurch all the church of Christ, except their sect, and make it as necessary to salvation to be a subject of the pope, as to be a Christian. And when, by their great corruption and abuses of Christianity, they have more need of charitable censures themselves than almost any sort of Christians, yet are they the boldest condemners of all others. The confirmed Christian can difference between the strong and weak, the sound and unsound members of the church, without dismembering any, and without unwarrantable separation from any. He will worship God in the purest manner he can, and locally join with those assemblies, where, all things considered, he may most honor God, and receive most edification; and will not sin for communion with any. He will sufficiently difference between a holy, orderly assembly, and a corrupt, disordered one; and between an able, faithful pastor, and an ignorant or worldly hireling. And he desireth that the pastors of the church may make that due separation by the holy discipline of Christ, which may prevent the people's disorderly separation. But for all this, he will not deny his presence upon just occasion, to any Christian congregation that worshippeth God in truth, though with many modal imperfections, so be it, they impose no sin upon him as necessary to his communion with him. Nor will he deny the spiritual communion of faith and love to those that he holdeth not local communion with. He knows that all our worship of God is sinfully imperfect, and that it is a dividing principle to hold, that we may join with none that worship God in a faulty manner; for then we must join with none on earth. He knoweth that his presence in the worship of God, is no sign of his approbation of all the failings of pastors or people, in their personal or modal imperfections, as long as he joineth not in a worship so corrupt as to be itself unacceptable to God. While men who are all imperfect and corrupt, are the wor-

shippers, the manner of their worship will be such as they, in some degree, imperfect and corrupt. The solid Christian hath his eye upon all the churches in the world, in the determining of such questions; he considereth what worship is offered to God in the churches of the several parties of Christians, the Greeks, Armenians, Abassines, Lutherans, &c. as well as what is done in the country where he liveth; and he considereth whether God disown and reject the worship of almost all the churches in the world, or not; for he dare no further reject them than God rejecteth them. Nor will he voluntarily separate from those assemblies where the presence of Christ, in his Spirit and acceptance, yet remaineth. And his fuller acquaintance with the gracious nature, office, and tenderness of Christ, together with greater love to his brethren, doth cause him in this to judge more gently than young censorious Christians do. And his humble acquaintance with his own infirmities, maketh him the more compassionate to others. If he should think that God would reject all that order not, and word not their prayers aright, he would be afraid of being rejected himself, who is still conscious of greater faultiness in his own prayers, than a mere defect in words and order; even of a great defectiveness in that faith, and desire, and love, and zeal, and reverence which should be manifested in prayer. Though he be more apprehensive than others, of the excellency and necessity of the holiness and spirituality of the soul in worship: yet withal he is more judicious and charitable than the peevish and passionate infant Christians, who think that God doth judge as they do, and seeth no grace where they see none; and taketh all to be superstitious or fanatical, that differ from their opinions or manner of worship; or that he is as ready to call every error, in the method or the words of prayer, idolatry or will-worship, as those are that speak not what they know, but what they have heard some teachers whom they reverence, say before them. "He that dwelleth in love, doth dwell in God, and God in him." And he that dwelleth in God, is liker to be best acquainted with his mind, concerning his children and his worship, than he that dwelleth in wrath, and pride, and partiality.



2. But the weak Christian (though so far as he hath grace, he is of the same mind, and abhorreth discord and division among the flock of Christ, yet) being more dark, and selfish, and distempered, he is much more prone to unwarrantable separations and divisions than the stronger Christian is. He is narrower sighted, and looketh little further than his own acquaintance, and the country where he liveth ; and mindeth not sufficiently the general state of the churches through the world, nor understandeth well the interest of Christ and Christianity in the earth. His knowledge and experience being small, his charity also is but small ; and a little thing tempteth him to condemn another, and aggravate his faults, and think him unworthy of the communion of the saints. He is much more sensible of the judgment, and affections, and concernments of those few with whom he doth converse, and that are of his opinion, than of the judgment, and practice, and concernments of the universal church. He knoweth not how to prefer the judgments and holiness of some that he thinketh more excellent than the rest, without much undervaluing and censuring of all others that are not of their opinion ; he cannot choose the actual local communion of the best society, without some unjust contempt of others, or separation from them. He hath not so much knowledge as may sufficiently acquaint him with his ignorance ; and therefore he is apt to be unreasonably confident of his present apprehensions, and to think verily that all his own conceptions are the certain truth ; and to think them ignorant, or ungodly, or very weak at least, that differ from him. For he hath not thoroughly and impartially studied all that may be said on the other side. The authority of his chosen teacher and sect, is greater with him (if he fall into that way) than the authority of all the most wise and holy persons in the world besides. What the Scripture speaketh of the unbelieving world, he is apt to apply to all those of the church of Christ, that are not of his mind and party. And when Christ commandeth us to come out of the world, he is prone to understand it of coming out from the church into some stricter and narrower society ; and is apt with the papists, to appropriate the name and privileges of the church, to his party alone, and to condemn all others. Especially if the church-governors be carnal and self-seeking, or otherwise very culpable ; and if

discipline be neglected, and if profaneness be not sufficiently discountenanced, and godliness promoted, he thinketh that such a church is no church, but a profane society. God hath taught him by repentance to see the mischief of ungodliness, but he yet wanteth that experience which is needful to make him know the mischief of church divisions. He had too much experience himself, of the evil of profaneness before his conversion; but he hath not tried the evil of schism; and without some sad experience of its fruits, in himself or others, he will hardly know it as it should be known; because it is the custom of some malignant enemies of godliness, to call the godly heretics, schismatics, factious sectaries, &c. therefore the very names do come into credit with him; and he thinks there are no such persons in the world, or that there is no danger of any such crimes, till he be taught by sad experience, that the professors of sincerity are in as much danger on that side as on the other; and that the church, as well as Christ, doth suffer between two thieves, the profane and the dividers. Paul was unjustly called the ringleader of a sect, (Acts xxiv. 5.), and Christianity called a heresy and a sect, every where spoken against; Acts xxviii. 22. xxiv. 14. But for all that, heresy is a fruit of the flesh, (Gal. v. 20.) and some of them called damnable; (2 Pet. ii. 1.) and they are the trial of the church, to difference the approved members from the chaff; 1 Cor. xi. 19. And an obstinate heretic is to be avoided by true believers; Titus iii. 10. And the Pharisees and Sadducees are well reputed to be several sects; Acts v. 17. xv. 5. xxvi. 5. And dividers and divisions are justly branded as aforesaid. There must be no schism in the body of Christ; 1 Cor. xii. 25. The following of selected teachers, in a way of division from the rest, or opposition to them, doth shew, that men are carnal in too great a measure, though it be not in predominancy, as in the profane. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not car-

nal?" 2 Cor. iii. 1—3. How much more when he that is for Paul doth censure and rail at Cephas and Apollos? He that hath seen the course of men professing godliness in England in this age, may easily and sadly know how prone weak Christians are to unjust separations and divisions, and what are the effects. He that had heard many zealous in prayer, and other duties, and the next year see them turning Quakers, and railing in the open congregations at the most able, holy, self-denying ministers of Christ, and at their flocks, with a 'Come down thou deceiver, thou hireling, thou wolf, ye are all greedy dogs, &c., and shall see how yet poor souls run into that reviling, and irrational sect (to say nothing of all other sects among us,) will no longer doubt whether the weak be inclined to schism, but will rather lament the dangerousness of their station; and know that all is not done when a sinner is converted from an ungodly state. Study the reason of those three texts; Ephes. iv. 13—16. "For the edifying the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, so that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of itself in love." Here you see the children are apt to be carried into dividing parties. And that they are more apt to be proud, and that way to miscarry, see 1 Tim. iii. 6. "Not a novice (or raw young Christian) lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil," and then followeth the effect, Acts xx. 30. "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." I would not have you groundlessly accuse any Christian with a charge of pride; but I must tell you that the childish pride of apparel is a petty business, in comparison of that pride which many in sordid attire have manifested, who in their ignorance do rage and foam out words of false-

hood and reproach against Christ's ministers and servants, as if they were fools or impious in comparison of them, speaking evil of that which they never understood. The lifting up the heart above the people of the Lord, in the pride of supposed holiness, is incomparably worse than pride of learning, honor, greatness, wit, or wealth. Nay, it hath often been to me a matter of wonder to observe how little all those plain and urgent texts of Scripture, which cry down division, do work upon many of the younger Christians, who yet are as quickly touched as any, with a text that speaketh against profaneness and lukewarmness. In a word, they are often of the temper of James and John, when they would fain have had Christ revenged himself on his opposers by fire from heaven; "They know not what manner of spirit they are of;" Luke ix. 55. They think verily that it is a holy zeal for God, when it is the boiling of passion, pride, and selfishness. They feel not the sense of such words as Christ's, "I pray also for them who shall believe on me, through their word, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me;" &c. John xvii. 20—24.

3. And as for the seeming Christian, in this they are of several sorts. When their carnal interest lieth in compliance with the major part and stronger side, then no men do more cry up unity and obedience. What a noise do many thousand Papist prelates, Jesuits, and friars make with these two words throughout the world. Unity and obedience (unto them upon their terms) do signify principally their worldly greatness, wealth, and power. But if the hypocrite be engaged in point of honor, or other carnal interest on the suffering side, or be out of hope of any advantage, in the common road, then no man is so much for separation and singularity as he. For he must needs be noted for somebody in the world, and this is the chief way that he findeth to accomplish it. And so being "lifted up with pride, he falleth into the condemnation of the devil," and becomes a firebrand in the church.

LIII. 1. A Christian indeed, is not only zealous for the unity and concord of believers, but he seeketh it on the right terms, and in the way that is fittest to attain it. Unity, peace, and concord, are like

piety and honesty, things so unquestionably good, that there are scarce any men of reason and common sobriety, that ever were heard to oppose them directly and for themselves: and therefore all that are enemies to them are yet pretenders to them; and oppose them, 1. In their causes only, 2. Or covertly, and under some other name. Every man would have unity, concord, and peace in his own way, and upon his own terms. But if the right terms had been understood and consented to as sufficient, the Christian world had not lain so many hundred years in the sin, and shame, and ruins as it hath done. And the cause of all is, that Christians indeed, that have clear, confirmed judgments, and strength of grace, are very few; and for number and strength, unable to persuade or over-rule the weak, the passionate, and the false-hearted, worldly, hypocritical multitude; who bear down all the counsels and endeavors of the wise.

The judicious, faithful Christian knoweth, that there are three degrees or sorts of Christian communion, which have their several terms. 1. The universal church communion, which all Christians as such must hold among themselves. 2. Particular church communion, which those that are conjoined for personal communion in worship, do hold under the same pastors and among themselves. 3. The extraordinary intimate communion that some Christians hold together, who are bosom friends, or are especially able and fit to be helpful and comfortable to each other.

The last concerneth not our present business; we must hold church communion with many that are unfit to be our bosom friends, and that have no eminency of parts or piety, or any strong persuading evidence of sincerity. But the terms of catholic communion he knoweth are such as these. 1. They must be such as were the terms of church communion in the days of the apostles. 2. They must be such as are plainly and certainly expressed in the holy Scriptures. 3. And such as the universal church hath in some ages since been actually agreed in. 4. And those points are most likely to be such, which all the differing parties of Christians are agreed in, as necessary to communion to this day, (so we call not those Christians that deny the essentials of Christianity.) 5. Every man in the

former ages of the church, was admitted to this catholic church communion, who in the baptismal vow or covenant, gave up himself to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; his Owner, Governor, and Father, renouncing the flesh, the world, and the devil. And more particularly, as man hath an understanding, a will, and an executive power, which must all be sanctified to God, so the creed was the particular rule for the 'cre-denda' or things to be believed, and the Lord's prayer for the 'pe-tenda' or things to be willed, loved, and desired, and the ten commandments for the 'agenda' or things to be done; so that to consent to these rules particularly, and to all the holy Scriptures implicitly and generally, was the thing then required to catholic communion. The belief of the doctrine being necessary for the sanctifying of the heart and life, the belief of so much is of necessity, without which the heart cannot be sanctified, or devoted in covenant to God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator; and without which we cannot love God (as reconciled to us in Christ) above all, and our neighbors as ourselves. So that, in a word, he that can tell what the baptismal vow or covenant is, can tell what is necessary to that catholic church communion, which belongeth to Christians as Chrisians, at how great a distance soever they dwell from one another.

And then for particular church communion, which is local and personal, it is moreover necessary, 1. That each member acknowledge and submit to the same pastors. 2. That they be guided by them in the convenient circumstances and adjuncts of worship. For if some persons will not consent or submit to the same pastors that the body of the church consenteth and submiteth to, they cannot have communion particularly and locally with that church, nor are they members of it, no more than they can be members of the same kingdom that have not the same king. And there being no solemn worship performed but by the ministry of those pastors, they cannot join in the worship that join not with the minister. And if some members will not consent and submit to the necessary determination of the adjuncts or external modes of worship, they cannot join in local, particular church communion where that worship is performed. As if the pastor and the body of the church will meet in such a place, at

such a day and hour, and some members will not meet with them at that place, and day, and hour, they cannot possibly then have their local, personal communion. Or if the pastor will use such a translation of the Scriptures, or such a version of the Psalms, or such a method in preaching and prayer, or such notes or books, and other like helps; if any members will not submit, nor hold communion with the rest, unless that translation, or version, or method of preaching or praying, or notes or books be laid aside, he cannot have communion while he refuseth it. If the pastor, and all the rest will not yield to him, he must join with some other church that he can agree with. And as long as the catholic church communion is maintained, (which consisteth in unity, of the Christian covenant, or of Christianity, or of faith, love, and obedience,) the difference of modes and circumstances between particular churches, must be allowed without any breach of charity, or without disowning one another. And he that cannot be a member of one particular church, may quietly join himself to another, without condemning that which he dissenteth from, so far as to hinder his catholic communion with it, (even as among the papists, men may be of which order or of religious persons they best like, as long as they submit to their general government.) And here the strong, judicious Christian for his part, will never be guilty of church divisions. For, 1. He will make nothing necessary to church communion, which any sober, pious, peaceable minds shall have any just reason to except against, or which may not well be manifested to be for the edification of the church. 2. And he will bear with the weak dissenters so far as will stand with the peace and welfare of the church. 3. And he will particularly give leave to such weak ones as cannot yet hold communion with him, being peaceable, and not promoting heresy, ungodliness, or sedition, to join to another church where they can hold communion with peace to their own consciences; as long as they continue their aforesaid catholic communion. For the strong know that they must not only bear with, but bear the "infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves, but every one of them to please his neighbor for good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself." And so they will "receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God, not des-

pising the weak, nor rejecting them that God receiveth;" Rom. xv. 1—3. 7. xiv. 1—4. 17, 18. And thus you may see how easy a matter it were to unite and reconcile all the Christian world, if the principles of the judicious, confirmed Christian might be received and prevail; and that it is not he that is the cause of the abundance of sin and calamity which divisions have caused, and continued in the church. But that which now seemeth an impossible thing, may quickly and easily be accomplished if all were such as he. And that the difficulty of reconciling and uniting Christians, lieth not first in finding out the terms, but in making men fit to receive and practice the terms from the beginning received by the churches. This is *Lirinensis's* '*Quod semper, ubique, et ab omnibus receptum est*;' supposing still that the magistrate be submitted to by every soul, even as he is the keeper of both tables; Rom. xiii. 1—3.

2. But the weak Christian is too easily tempted to be the divider of the church, by expecting that it be united upon his impossible or unrighteous terms. Sometimes he will be orthodox overmuch, or rather wise in his own conceit, (Rom. xii. 16.) and then none are judged fit for his communion that be not of his opinion, in controverted doctrinals, (e.g. predestination, the manner of the work of grace, freewill, perseverance, and abundance such.) Sometimes he will be righteous overmuch, or (to speak more properly) superstitious; and then none are fit for his communion that worship not God in that method and manner for circumstantialia, which he esteemed best. And his charity is so weak, that it freeth him not from thinking evil (1 Cor. xiii.), and so narrow, that it covereth not either many or great infirmities. The more need he hath of the forbearance and charity of others, the less can he bear or forbear others himself. The strong Christian must bear the infirmities of the weak; but the weak Christian can scarce bear the weak or strong. Nay, he is oft too impatient with some of their virtues and duties, as well as with their infirmities. He is of too private a spirit, and too insensible of the public interest of the church of Christ. And therefore he must have all the world come over to him, and be conformed to his opinion and party, and unite upon his mistaken, narrow terms, if they will have communion with him. I mean, it is thus with him,

when the temptation on that side prevaleth. And sometimes he is overcome with the temptation of domination, to make his judgment a rule to others; and then he quite overvalueth his own understanding, and will needs be judge of all the controversies in the church; and taketh it as unsufferable, if wiser and better men do not take him as infallible, and in every thing observe his will. And when his brethren give him the reason of their dissent, as his judgment is not clear enough to understand them, so his passion and partiality are too strong to suffer his judgment to do its part. And thus oftentimes he is a greater hindrance to the church's unity, than the enemies of the church themselves. For he hath not judgment enough to guide him the right way, and yet he hath so much zeal as will not suffer him to keep his errors to him.

3. And all these distempers that are but in a lower degree in the weak Christian, are predominant in the hypocrite. The church shall have no concord or peace if he can hinder it, but what is consistent with his carnal interest, his honor, or wealth, or dignity in the world. The pride and covetousness which rule himself, he would have to make the terms of concord, and to rule all others. It is hypocrites in the church that are the greatest cause of discord and divisions, having selfish spirits, principles, and ends, and having always a work of their own to do, which suits not well with the work of Christ; and yet Christ's work must be subjected to it, and ordered, and overruled by it. And while they pretend to go to the Scriptures, or to councils or fathers for their reasons, indeed they go first for them to their worldly interest; and then would fain hire or press the Scripture, church, or fathers to serve their turn, and come in as witnesses on their side. And thus the church, as well as Christ, is betrayed by the covetous Judases of his own family. And the servants of the world, the flesh, and the devil, that take up the livery of Christ, and usurp the name and honor of Christian, do more effectually hinder the concord and prosperity of the church, than any open enemies do. And those that are indeed no Christians, do cause Christianity to be reproached; even as spies and traitors that are hired by the enemy to take up arms in the army which

they fight against, that they may betray it by their fraud, and do more harm to it by raising mutinies, and by false conduct, than a multitude of professed enemies could have done. It is proud, and worldly, carnal hypocrites, that hinder most the concord of believers.

LIV. 1. A confirmed Christian is of a peaceable spirit. He is not masterly, domineering, turbulent, hurtful, cruel, seditious, factious, or contentious. He is like ripened fruits that are mellow and sweet, when the younger, greener fruits are sour and harsh. He is not wise in his own conceit, (Rom. xii. 16.), and therefore not over-urgent in obtruding his conceits on others, not quarrelsome with all that cannot entertain them, nor will he easily lay men's salvation or damnation, no, nor the church's peace upon them. He is "kindly affectioned to others with brotherly love, yea, loveth his neighbor as himself;" ver. 10. xiii. 9, 10. And therefore he doth to others as he would they should do to him; and uses them as he would be used by them. And then how far they are like to suffer by him, you may easily judge. For "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" ver. 10. He is above the portion of the worldling, and a contemner of that vanity which carnal men account their felicity; and therefore he preferreth love and quietness before it, and can lose his right when the interest of love and peace requireth it. He is become as a little child in his conversion (Matt. xviii. 3.), and is low and little in his own eyes, and therefore contendeth not for superiority or preeminence, either in place or power, or reputation of his learning, wisdom, or piety; but "in honor preferreth others" before himself;" Rom. xii. 10. "He mindeth not high things, but condescendeth to men of low estate;" Rom. xii. 16. and therefore will not contend for estimation and precedency, nor scramble to be highest, though he rise by the ruins of men's bodies and souls. "If it be possible as much as lieth in him, he will live peaceably with all men;" ver. 18. For he is not one that by word or deed will avenge himself; but when the wrath of others is up like a blustering storm, he giveth place to it, he boweth before it, or goeth out of the way. "If his enemy hunger, he feedeth him; if he thirst, he giveth him drink;" ver. 19. when oppressors would deprive not only an enemy, but the righteous of their meat and drink; and thus he melteth his hardened

enemies by heaping kindness upon them when they are wrathful, and proud, and contentious, and do him wrong, or use provoking words against him, he is not overcome of their evil to imitate them, but he overcometh their evil with his good; ver. 20, 21. If God hath given him more knowledge and abilities than others, he doth not presently set up himself to be admired for it, nor speak disdainfully or contemptuously of those that are not of his mind. But he sheweth the eminency of his wisdom, "with meekness by the works of a good conversation," and by doing better than the unwiser do; James iii. 1—13. He is endued with the "wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality" (or wavering in persecution, as Dr. Hammond renders it), and without hypocrisy. And thus the "fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace; James iii. 17, 18. As he is "taught of God to love his brother;" 1 Thess. iv. 9. so that same teaching with experience of the effects assureth him, that they that pretend to be wiser and better than others, when "they have bitter, envious zeal and strife in their hearts, they vainly glory and lie against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work;" James iii. 14, 15, 16. (Read but the story of the Jewish zealots in Josephus, and the heretical zealots in all ages of the church, and you will perceive the truth of this.) When such quarrelsome spirits are filling the church with contentions, or vexations about their meats and drinks, and days, &c. the Christian indeed understandeth that 'the kingdom of God consisteth' not of such things as these, 'but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" and he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of (wise and sober) men. Therefore he followeth after things, which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another: and will not for meats, &c. destroy the work of God;" Rom. xiv. 17—20. He stayeth not till peace be offered him, or brought home to him, but "he followeth peace with all men, as well as holiness;" Heb. xii. 14. If it fly from him, he pursueth it; if it be denied him he seeketh it, and will not refuse to stoop to the poorest for it, and to beg it of his

inferiors, if it were upon his knees, rather than be denied it, and live an unpeaceable, disquiet life; Psalm xxxiv. 14. For he believeth that "blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God;" Matt. v. 9.

2. And the weak Christian hath the same spirit, and therefore the love of peace is most predominant in him. But, alas, he is too easily tempted into religious passions, discontents, contentious disputations, quarrelsome and opprobrious words; and his judgment lamentably darkened and perverted, whenever contentious zeal prevaleth, and passions do perturb the quiet and orderly operations of the soul. He wanteth both the knowledge and the experience, and the mellowness of spirit, which riper Christians have attained; he hath a less degree of charity, and is less acquainted with the mischiefs of unpeaceableness; and therefore it is the common course of young professors, to be easily tempted into unpeaceable ways; and when they have long tried them (if they prove not hypocrites) to come off at last upon experience of the evils of them; and so the young Christians, conjunct with some hypocrites, make up the rigorous, fierce, contentious and vexatious party; and the aged, ripe Christians make up the holy, moderate, healing party, that groan and pray for the Church's peace, and mourn in secret both for the ungodliness and violence which they cannot heal. Yea, the difference is much apparent, in the books and sermons which each of them is best pleased with. The ripe, experienced Christian loveth those sermons that kindle love, and tend to peace; and love such healing books as do parrow differences and tend to reconcile and heal; such as Bishop Hall's Peace-maker, and "Pax terris," and all his writings; and Bishop Davenant's, Bishop Morton's, and Bishop Hall's "Pacification Epistles to Duræus," and "Mr. Burroughs' Irenicon," Ludov. Crocius, Amyraldus, Junius, Paræus's and many other Irenicons written by foreign divines, to say nothing that are upon single controversies. But the younger, sour, uncharitable Christians are better pleased with such books and sermons, as call them aloud to be very zealous for this or that contested point of doctrine, or for or against some circumstance of worship or church discipline, or about some fashions, or customs, or indifferent things, as if the kingdom of God were in them: Rom. xiv. 1, 2. 15, 16.

3. But the seeming Christian, is either a mere temporizer, that will be of that religion, whatever it be, that is most in fashion, or which the higher powers are of, or which will cost him least : or else he will run into the other extreme, and lift up himself by affected singularities, and by making a bustle and stir in the world, about some small and controverted point : and careth not to sacrifice the peace and safety of the church, to the honor of his own opinions. And as small as the Christian church is, he must be of a smaller society than it, that he may be sure to be amongst the best ; while indeed he hath no sincerity at all, but placeth his hopes in being of the right church, or party, or opinion : and for his party or church, he burneth with a feverish kind of zeal, and is ready to call for fire from heaven ; and to deceive him, the devil sendeth him some from hell, to consume them that are not of his mind : yet doth he bring it as an angel of light, to defend the truth and church of Christ. And indeed, when the devil will be the defender of truth, or of the church, or of peace, or order, or piety, he doth it with the most burning zeal : you may know him by the means he useth. He defendeth the church, by forbidding the people to read the Scriptures in a known tongue, and by imprisoning and burning the soundest and holiest members of it, and abusing the most learned faithful pastors ; and defendeth the flock by casting out the shepherds, and such like means, as the murderers of the Waldenses, and the massacres of France and Ireland, and the Spanish Inquisition, and queen Mary's bonfires, and the powder plot ; yea, and the Munster, and the English rage and phrenzies, may give you fuller notice of. He that hath no holiness, nor charity to be zealous for, will be zealous for his church, or sect, or customs, or opinions ; and then this zeal must be the evidence of his piety. And so the inquisitors have thought they have religiously served God, by murdering his servants : and it is the badge of their honor to be the devil's hangmen, to execute his malice on the members of Christ ; and all this is done in zeal for religion by irreligious hypocrites. There is no standing before the malicious zeal of a graceless Pharisee, when it riseth up for his carnal interest, or the honor, and traditions, and customs of his sect ; (Luke vi. 7.) " And they were filled with madness, and communed with one another what they might do

to Jesus;" Luke iv. 28. Acts v. 17. xiii. 45. John xvi. 2. Rom. x. 2. Phil. iii. 6. Acts xxvi. 10, 11. The zeal of a true Christian consumeth himself with grief to see the madness of the wicked; but the zeal of the hypocrite consumeth others, that by the light of the fire his religiousness may be seen. You may see the Christian's fervent love to God, by the fervent flames which he can suffer for his sake: and you may see the fervent love of the hypocrite, by the flames which he kindleth for others. By these he crieth with Jehu, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord;" 2 Kings x. 16. 2 Sam. xxi. 2.

LV. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that most highly esteemeth and regardeth the interest of God and men's salvation in the world, and taketh all things else to be inconsiderable in comparison of these. The interest of great men, and nobles, and commanders; yea, and his own in corporal respects, as riches, honor, health and life, he taketh to be things unworthy to be named, in competition with the interest of Christ and souls. The thing that his heart is most set upon in the world is, that God be glorified, and that the world acknowledge him their King, and that his laws be obeyed, and that darkness, infidelity and ungodliness may be cast out; and that pride and worldliness, and fleshly lusts, may not hurry the miserable world unto perdition. It is one of the saddest and most amazing thoughts that ever entereth into his heart, to consider how much of the world is overwhelmed in ignorance and wickedness, and how great the kingdom of the devil is, in comparison with the kingdom of Christ; that God should forsake so much of his creation; that Christianity should not be owned in above the sixth part of the world; and popish pride and ignorance, with the corruptions of many other sects, and the worldly, carnal minds of hypocrites, should rob Christ of so much of this little part, and leave him so small a flock of holy ones, that must possess the kingdom. His soul consenteth to the method of the Lord's prayer, as prescribing us the order of our desires. And in his prayers he seeketh first, (in order of estimation and intention,) the hallowing of God's name, and the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth as it is done in heaven; before his daily bread, or the pardon of his sins, or the deliverance of his soul from temptations and the evil one. Mark him in his prayers, and

you shall find that he is above other men, taken up in earnest petitions for the conversion of the heathen and infidel world, and the undeceiving of Mahometans, Jews, and heretics, and the clearing of the church from those papal tyrannies, and fopperies and corruptions, which make Christianity hateful or contemptible, in the eyes of the heathen and Mahometan world, and hinder their conversion. No man so much lamenteth the pride and covetousness, and laziness and unfaithfulness of the pastors of the church: because of the doleful consequents to the Gospel and the souls of men, and yet with all possible honor to the sacred office, which they thus profane. No man so heartily lamenteth the contentions and divisions among Christians, and the doleful destruction of charity thereby. It grieveth him to see how much selfishness, pride, and malice, prevail with them that should shine as lights in a benighted world, and how obstinate and incurable they seem to be, against the plainest means, and humblest motions, for the church's edification and peace; Psal. cxx. 6, 7. cxxii. 6. Phil. ii. 1—4. Psal. cxix. 136. Zeph. iii. 18. Ezek. ix. 4. Psal. lxix. 9. John ii. 17. He envieth not kings and great men their dominions, wealth or pleasure: nor is he at all ambitious to participate in their tremendous exaltation. But the thing that his heart is set upon is, "that the kingdoms of this world may all become the kingdoms of the Lord; Rev. xi. 15; and that the Gospel may every where "have free course and be glorified," and the preachers of it be encouraged, or at least "be delivered from unreasonable, wicked men; 2 Thes. iii. 1, 2. Little careth he who is uppermost or conquereth in the world, or who goeth away with the preferments or riches of the earth (supposing that he fail not of his duty to his rulers) so that it may go well with the affairs of the Gospel, and souls be but helped in the way to heaven. Let God be honored, and souls converted and edified, and he is satisfied. This is it that maketh the times good in his account; he thinketh not as the proud and carnal church of Rome, that the times are best when the clergy are richest and greatest in the world, and overtop princes, and claim the secular power, and live in worldly pomp and pleasures; but when holiness most aboundeth, and the members of Christ are likest to their head, and when multitudes of sincere believers are daily added to

the church, and when the mercy and holiness of God shine forth in the numbers and purity of the saints. It is no riches or honor that can be heaped upon himself, or any others, that make the times seem good to him, if knowledge and godliness are discountenanced and hindered, and the way to heaven is made more difficult; if atheism, infidelity, ungodliness, pride and malignity do prevail, and truth and sincerity are driven into the dark; and when "he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." Psal. lix. 15. When "the godly man ceaseth and the faithful fail from among the children of men; when every man speaketh vanity to his neighbor, and the poor are oppressed, and the needy sigh, and the wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted." Psal. xii, 1, 2. 5. 8. The times are good when the men are good; and evil when the men are evil, be they never so great or prosperous. As Nehemiah, when he was cup-bearer to the king himself, yet wept and mourned for the desolations of Jerusalem; Nehem. i. 3, 4. ii. 2, 3. Whoever prospereth, the times are ill when there is a "famine of the word of the Lord, and when the chief of the priests and people do transgress and mock God's messengers, and despise his word, and misuse his prophets; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14. 16. Amos viii. 11, 12. When the apostles are "charged to speak no more in the name of Christ; Acts iv. 18. v. 40. It is a text enough to make one tremble, to think into what a desperate condition the Jews were carried by a partial, selfish zeal; "who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sin alway, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost; 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. When the interest of themselves and their own nation and priesthood, did so far blind and pervert them, that they durst persecute the preachers of the Gospel, and "forbid them to speak to the people that they may be saved;" it was a sign that "wrath was come upon them to the uttermost." A Christian indeed had rather be without Jeroboam's kingdom, than 'make Israel to sin,' and 'make the basest of the people priests,' and 'stretch out his hand against the prophet of the Lord:' 1 Kings xii. 30, 31. xiii. 4. He had rather labor with his hands, as Paul, and live in poverty

and rags, so that the Gospel may be powerfully and plentifully preached, and holiness abound, than to live in all the prosperity of the world, with the hindrance of men's salvation. He had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than be a lord in the kingdom of satan. He cannot rise by the ruins of the church, nor feed upon those morsels that are the price of the blood of souls.

2. And the weakest Christian is in all this of the same mind, saving that private and selfish interest is not so fully overcome, not so easily and resolutely denied; Luke xiv. 26. 33.

3. But here the hypocrite sheweth the falseness of his heart. His own interest is it that chooseth his religion; and that he may not torment himself, by being wicked in the open light, he maketh himself believe, that whatsoever is most for his own interest is most pleasing unto God, and most for the good of souls and the interest of the Gospel; so that the carnal Romish clergy can persuade their consciences, that all the darkness and superstitions of their kingdom, and all the opposition of the light of the Gospel of Christ, do make for the honor of God and the good of souls; because they uphold their tyranny, wealth, and pomp, and pleasure. Or if they cannot persuade their consciences to believe so gross a lie, let church and souls speed how they will, they will favor nothing that favoereth not their interest and ends. And the interest of the flesh and Spirit, and of the world and Christ, are so repugnant, that commonly such worldlings take the serious practice of godliness for the most hateful thing, and the serious practisers of it for the most insufferable persons: Acts vii. 57. xxi. 36. xxii. 22, xxiv. 5, 6. John xix. 15. The enmity of interests, with the enmity of nature, between the woman's and the serpent's seed, will maintain that warfare to the end of the world; in which the prince of the powers of darkness shall seem to prevail, (as he did against our crucified Lord:) but he shall be overcome by his own successes, and the just shall conquer by patience, when they seem most conquered. The name, and form, and image of religion, the carnal hypocrite doth not only bear, but favor, and himself accept; but the life and serious practice he abhorreth, as inconsistent with his worldly interest and ends. For these he can find in his heart, with Ahab, to hate and imprison Micaiah, and prefer his four hundred flattering

prophets; 1 Kings xxii. 6. 8. 24. 27. If Luther will touch the pope's crown and the friars' bellies, they will not scruple to oppose and ruin, both him and all such preachers in the world, if they were able: John xi. 48. 50. Acts v. 28.

LVI. 1. A Christian indeed, is one whose holiness usually maketh him an eyesore to the ungodly world; and his charity and peaceableness, and moderation, maketh him to be censured as not strict enough, by the superstitious and dividing sects of Christians. For seeing the church hath suffered between these two sorts of opposers, ever since the suffering of Christ himself; it cannot be but the solid Christian offend them both, because he hath that which both dislike. All the ungodly hate him for his holiness, which is cross to their interest and way; and all the dividers will censure him for that universal charity and moderation, which is against their factious and destroying zeal (described, James iii.). Even Christ himself was not strict enough (in superstitious observances) for the ceremonious, zealous Pharisees. He transgressed, with his disciples, the tradition of the elders, in neglecting their observances, who transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition; Matt. xv. 2, 3. He was not strict enough in their uncharitable observation of the sabbath day; Matt. xii. 2. John, who was eminent for fasting, they said, had a devil. "The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.' But wisdom is justified of her children;" Matt. xi. 18, 19. And the weak Christians; Rom. xiv. 1—3. did censure those that did eat those meats and do those things, which they conceived to be unlawful. They that err themselves, and make God a service which he never appointed, will censure all as lukewarm, or temporizers, or wide-conscienced men, that err not with them, and place not their religion in such superstitious observances, as "touch not, taste not, handle not," &c. Col. ii. 18. 21—23. And the raw, censorious Christians are offended with the charitable Christian, because he damnableth not as many and as readily as they, and shutteth not enough out of the number of believers, and judgeth not rigorously enough of their ways. In a word, he is taken by one sort to be too strict, and by the other to be too compliant or indifferent in

religion ; because he placeth not the kingdom of God in meats and days, and such like circumstances, but in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost ;" Rom. xiv. 15—17. And as Paul withstood Peter to the face, for drawing men to make scruple or conscience of things lawful ; Gal. ii. 11—13 ; so is the sound Christian withstood by the superstitious, for not making scruple of lawful things.

2. And the weak Christian is in the same case, so long as he followeth prudent, pious, charitable guides. But if he be taken in the snares of superstition, he pleaseth the superstitious party, though he displease the world.

3. And whereas the solid Christian will not stir an inch from truth and duty, to escape either the hatred of the wicked, or the bitterest censures of the sectary, or the weak ; the hypocrite must needs have one party on his side : for if both condemn him, and neither applaud him, he looseth his peculiar reward : Matt. vi. 2. 5. xxiii. 5—8.

LVII. 1. The confirmed Christian doth understand the necessity of a faithful ministry, for the safety of the weak, (as well as the conversion of the wicked) and for the preservation of the interest of religion upon earth ! And therefore no personal unworthiness of ministers, nor any calumnies of enemies can make him think or speak dishonorably of that sacred office. But he reverenceth it as instituted by Christ ; and though he loathe the sottishness and wickedness of those that run before they are sent, and are utterly insufficient or ungodly, and take it up for a living or trade only, as they would a common work ; and are "sons of Belial, that know not the Lord, and cause the offering of the Lord to be abhorred ;" 1 Sam. ii. 2. 17. yet no so such temptation shall overthrow his reverence to the office, which is the ordinance of Christ ; much less will he be unthankful to those who are able and faithful in their office, and labor instantly for the good of souls, as willing to spend and be spent for their salvation. When the world abuseth and derideth, and injureth them, he is one that honoreth them both for their work and master's sake, and the experience which he hath had of the blessing of God on their labors to himself. For he knoweth that the smiting of the shepherds, is but the devil's ancient way for the scattering of the flock ; though he knoweth that "if the salt hath lost its savor, it is

good for nothing, neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill ; but men cast it out, and it is trodden under foot ; (he that hath ears to hear, let him hear ;)” Luke xiv. 34, 35. Matt. v. 13, 14. Yet he also knoweth, that he “ that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet’s reward ;” Matt. x. 41, 42. And that, “ he that receiveth them, receiveth Christ, and he that despiseth them (that are sent by him) despiseth him ;” Luke x. 16. He therefore readily obeyed those commands, Heb. xiii. 17. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for they watch for your souls as those that must give an account ; 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. We beseech you brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works’ sake, and be at peace among yourselves ; 1 Tim. v. 17. Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor ; especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.”

2. But though the weak Christian be of the same mind so far as he is sanctified, yet is he much more easily tempted into a wrangling censoriousness against his teachers, though they be never so able and holy men ; and by seducers may be drawn to oppose them, or speak contemptuously of them, as the Galatians did of Paul, and some of the Corinthians ; accounting him as their enemy for telling them the truth when lately they would have plucked out their eyes to do him good ; Gal. iv. 15, 16.

3. But the hypocrite is most easily engaged against them, either when they grate upon the guilt of his former sin, or open his hypocrisy, or plainly cross him in his carnal interest, or else when his pride hath conquered his sobriety, and engaged him in some sect or erroneous way, which his teachers are against, and would reduce him from ; John vi. 66. Mark v. 27. 2 Chron. xxv. 16.

LVIII. 1. A Christian indeed is one that hath stored up such manifold experience of the fulfilling of God’s promises, and the hearing of prayers, and the goodness of his holy ways, as will greatly fortify him against all temptations to infidelity, apostasy, or distrust. No one hath stronger temptations usually than he, and no one is so well furnished with weapons to resist them. The arguments of most

others are fetched out of their books only ; but he hath moreover a life of experience to confirm his faith, and so hath the witness in himself. He hath tried and found that in God, in holiness, in faith, in prayer, which will never suffer him to forsake them. Yea, it is like that he hath upon record some such wonders in the answer of prayers, as might do much to silence an infidel himself. I am sure many Christians have had such strange appearances of the extraordinary hand of God, that hath done much to destroy the remnants of their own unbelief ; Psal. lxi. 16.

2. But the experiences of the younger, weaker Christian are much shorter, and less serviceable to their faith ; and they have not judgment enough to understand and make use of the dealings of God ; but are ready to plead his providences unto evil ends and consequences, and to take their own passionate imaginations for the workings of the Spirit. It is ordinary with them to say, ' this or that was set upon my heart, or spoken to me,' as if it had been some divine inspiration, when it was nothing but the troubled workings of a weak distempered brain : and it is their own fancy and heart that saith that to them, which they think the Spirit of God within them said ; Heb. v. 11—13. 2 Thess. ii. 21. John iv. 1. 1 Tim. iv. 1. 1 Cor. xii. 10. Jer: xxiii. 27, 28, 32. xxix. 8.

3. And the hypocrite wanteth those establishing experiments of the power of the Gospel, and the hearing of prayers, and fulfilling of promises, and communion with Christ in the Spirit ; and therefore he is the more open to the power of temptations, and a subtle disputer will easily corrupt him and carry him away to flat apostasy ; for he wanteth the root and witness in himself ; Matt. xiii. 21, 22. 1 John v. 10. Heb. vi. 6—8. Luke viii. 13.

.LIX. 1. A Christian indeed, is one that highly valueth sanctified affections and passions, that all he doth may be done as lively as possibly he can ; and also holy abilities for expression. But he much more valueth, the three great essential, constant parts of the new creature within him ; that is, 1. A high estimation of God, and Christ, and heaven and holiness in his understanding, above all that can be set in any competition. 2. A resolved choice and adhesion of the will, by which he preferreth God, and Christ, and heaven,

and holiness, above all that can be set against them, and is fixedly resolved here to place his happiness and his hopes. 3. The main drift and endeavors of his life, in which he "seeketh first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; Matt. vi. 33. 9. 20, 21. In these three (his highest estimation, his resolved choice and complacencies, and his chief endeavors) he taketh his standing constant evidences of his sincerity to consist; and by these he trieth himself as to his state, and not by the passionate feelings or affections of his heart; nor by his memory, or gifts, or orderly thinking, or expression. And it is these rational operations of his soul, in which he knoweth that holiness doth principally consist; and therefore he most laboreth to be strong in these: 1. To ground his judgment well; 2. And to resolve and fix his will; 3. And to order his conversation aright; Psal. l. 23. yet highly valuing sensible affections and gifts of utterance, but in subserviency to those which are the vital acts; 1 Cor. xiii. Rom. vii. 18, &c. vi. 16. 22. Rom. viii. 13 James ii. Col. i. 9. iii. 16.

2. But the weak Christian usually placeth most of his religion in the more affectionate and expressive part: he striveth more with his heart for passionate apprehensions, than for complacency and fixed resolution. He is often in doubt of his sincerity, when he wanteth the feeling affectionate workings which he desireth, &c. thinketh he hath no more grace than that he hath sensibility of expressive gifts; and so as he buildeth his comfort upon these inconstant signs, his comforts are accordingly inconstant. Sometimes he thinketh he hath grace, when his body or other advantages do help the excitation of his lively affections: and when the dulness of his body, or other impediments hinder this, he questioneth his grace again, because he understandeth not aright the nature and chiefest acts of grace.

3. The hypocrite hath neither the rational nor the passionate part in sincerity: but he may go much further in the latter than the former. A quick and passionate nature though unsanctified, may be brought to shed more tears, and express more fervor than many a holy person can: especially upon the excitation of some quickening sermons, or some sharp affliction, or great conviction, or at the approach of death. Few of the most holy persons can constantly re-

tain so lively, fervent, passionate repentings, and desires and resolutions to amend, as some carnal persons have in sickness. The power of fear alone doth make them more earnest, than love maketh many a gracious soul; but when the fear is over, they are the same again. How oft have I heard a sick man most vehemently profess his resolutions for a holy life, which all have come to nothing afterward? How oft have I heard a common drunkard, with tears, cry out against himself for his sin, and yet go on in it? And how many gracious persons have I known whose judgments and wills have been groundedly resolved for God and holiness, and their lives have been holy, fruitful, and obedient, who yet could not shed a tear for sin, nor feel any very great sorrows or joys? If you judge of a man by his earnestness in some good moods, and not by the constant tenor of his life, you will think many a hypocrite to be better than most saints. Who would have thought, that had seen him only in that fit, but that Sâul had been a penitent man, when he lift up his voice and wept, and said to David, "Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rewarded me good; whereas I have rewarded thee evil; 1 Sam. xxiv. 16—21. A smaller matter will raise some sudden passions, than will renew the soul, and give the preeminence to God, and holiness and heaven, in the judgment, will and conversation; Hosea vi. 4. xiii. 3. Isaiah lviii. 2. Matt. xiii. 20.

LX. 1. A Christian indeed, confirmed in grace, is one that maketh it the business of his life to prepare for death; and delayeth not his serious thoughts of it, and preparations for it, till it surprise him; and therefore when it cometh it findeth him prepared, and he gladly entertaineth it as the messenger of his father, to call him to his everlasting home. It is not a strange unexpected thing to him, to hear he must die; he died daily in his daily sufferings, and mortified contempt of worldly things, and in his daily expectation of his change. He wondereth to see men at a dying time, surprised with astonishment and terror, who jovially or carelessly neglected it before, as if they had never known till then that they must die. Or as if a few years time were reason enough for so great a difference. For that which he certainly knoweth will be, he looketh at as if it were even at hand; and his preparation for it is more serious in his health, than

other men's is on their deathbed. He useth more carefully to bethink himself what graces he shall need at a dying time, and in what case he shall then wish his soul to be ; and accordingly he laboreth in his provisions now, even as if it were to be to-morrow. He verily believeth that it is incomparably "better for him to be with Christ," than to abide on earth ; and therefore, though death of itself be an enemy, and terrible to nature, yet being the only passage into happiness, he gladly entertaineth it. Though he have not himself any clear apprehensions, of the place and state of the happiness of departed souls, yet it quieteth him to know that they "shall be with Christ," and that Christ knoweth all, and prepareth and secureth for him that promised rest ; John xii. 26. 2 Cor. v. 1. 7, 8. Phil. i. 21. 23. Luke xxiii. 43. Though he is not free from all the natural fears of death, yet his belief and hope of endless happiness doth abate those fears by the joyful expectation of the gain which followeth. See my book, called "The Last Enemy, and the Last Work of a Believer ;" and that of "Self-denial," against the fears of death.

But especially he loveth and longeth for the coming of Christ to judgment, as knowing that then the marriage-day of the Lamb is come, and then the desires and hopes of all believers shall be satisfied ; "then shall the righteous shine as stars in the kingdom of their Father : " and the hand of violence shall not reach them. Every enemy then is overcome, and all the Redeemer's work is consummated, and the kingdom delivered up unto the Father. Then shall the ungodly and the unmerciful be confounded, and the righteous filled with everlasting joy, when the Lord shall thoroughly plead their cause, and justify them against the accusations of Satan, and all the lies of his malicious instruments. O blessed, glorious, joyful day, when Christ shall come with thousands of his angels, "to execute vengeance on the ungodly world, and to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe ;" 2 Thess. i. 8—10. When the patient followers of the Lamb shall behold him in glory whom they have believed in, and shall see that they did not pray, or hope, or wait in vain ! When Christ himself and his sacred truth, shall be justified and glorified in the presence of the world, and his enemies mouths forever stopped. "When he shall convince all that are ungodly, of

all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him;" Jude 14, 15. Where then is the mouth that pleadeth the cause of infidelity and impiety? and reproached the serious holiness of believers? and made a jest of the judgments of the Lord? Then what terrors and confusion, and shame, what fruitless repentings will seize upon that man, that set himself against the holy ones of the Lord, and knew not the day of his visitation, and embraced the image and form of godliness, while he abhorred the power. The joys which will then possess the hearts of the justified, will be such as now no heart can comprehend. When love shall come to be glorified in the highest expression, to those that lately were so low; when all their doubts, and fears, and sorrows, shall be turned into full contenting sight, and all tears shall be wiped away, and all reproaches turned into glory, and every enemy overcome, and sin destroyed, and holiness effected, and our "vile bodies changed, and made like the glorious body of Christ;" Phil. iii. 20, 21. Col. iii. 3, 4. then will the love and work of our redemption be fully understood. And then a saint will be a saint indeed, when with Christ they shall "judge the angels and the world;" 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3: and shall hear from Christ, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" Matt. xxv. 34. "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord;" Matt. xxv. 21. Then "every knee shall bow to Christ, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;" Phil. ii. 9—11. Then sin will fully appear in its malignity, and holiness in its luster unto all. The proud will then be abased, and the mouths of all the wicked stopped; when they shall see, to their confusion, the glory of that Christ whom they despised, and of those holy ones whom they made their scorn. In vain will they then "knock when the door is shut, and cry, Lord, Lord, open unto us;" Matt. xxv. 10—12. And in vain will they then wish 'O that we had known the day of our visitation, that we might have died the death of the righteous, and our latter end might have been as his;' Numb. xxiii. 10. Rom. iii. 19. Job v. 16. Psal. cvii. 42. xxxi. 23. xiii. 6. 8.

The day of death is to true believers a day of happiness and joy; but it is much easier for them to think with joy on the coming of

Christ, and the day of judgment, because it is a day of fuller joy, and soul and body shall be conjoined in the blessedness ; and there is nothing in it to be so great a stop to our desires as death is, which naturally is an enemy. God hath put a love of life, and fear of death into the nature of every sensible creature, as necessary for the preservation of themselves and others, and the orderly government of the world. But what is there in the blessed day of judgment, which a justified child of God should be averse to? O, if he were but sure that this would be the day, or week, or year of the coming of his Lord, how glad would the confirmed Christian be ! And with what longings would he be looking up, to see that most desired sight.

2. And the weak Christian is so far of the same mind, that he had rather come to God by death and judgment, than not at all ; (except when temptations make him fear that he shall be condemned.) He hath fixedly made choice of that felicity, which till then he cannot attain. He would not take all the pleasures of this world for his hopes of the happiness of that day : but yet he thinketh not of it with so strong a faith and great consolation, nor with such boldness and desire, as the confirmed Christian doth ; but either with much more dull security, or more perplexity and fear. His thoughts of God and of the world to come, are much more dark and doubtful, and his fears of that day are usually so great, as to make his desires and joys scarcely felt : only he thinketh not of it with that contempt or stupidity as the infidel or hardened sinner, nor with the terrors of those that have no God, no Christ, no hope ; (except when temptation bringeth him near to the borders of despair.) His death indeed is unspeakably safer than the death of the ungodly, and the joys which he is entering into will quickly end the terror ; but yet he hath no great comfort at the present, but only so much trust in Christ, as keepeth his heart from sinking into despair.

3. But to the hypocrite or seeming Christian, death and judgment are the most unwelcome days, and the thoughts of them are the most unwelcome thoughts. He would take any tolerable life on earth, at any time, for all his hopes of heaven ; and that not only through the doubts of his own sincerity, (which may sometimes be

the case of a tempted Christian,) but through the unsoundness of his belief of the life to come, or the utter unsuitableness of his soul to such a blessedness ; which maketh him look at it as less desirable to him, than a life of fleshly pleasures here. All that he doth for heaven is upon mere necessity, because he knoweth that die he must, and he had rather be in heaven than in hell, though he had rather be in prosperity on earth than either. And as he taketh heaven but as a reserve or second good, so he seeketh it with reserves, and in the second place. And having no better preparations for death and judgment, no marvel if they be his greatest terror. He may possibly by his self-deceit have some abatement of his fears, and he may by pride and wit seem very valiant and comfortable at his death, to hide his fear and pusillanimity from the world. But the cause of all his misery is, that he sought not first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and laid not up a treasure upon heaven, but upon earth, and loved this world above God, and above the world to come ; and so his heart is not set on heaven, nor his affections on things above : and therefore he hath not that love to God, to Christ, to saints, to perfect holiness, which should make that world most desirable in his eyes, and make him think unfeignedly that it is best for him to depart and live with Christ for ever. Having not the Divine nature, nor having lived the Divine life in walking with God, his complacency and desires are carnal, according to the nature which he hath. And this is the true cause, (and not only his doubts of his own sincerity,) of his unwillingness to die, or to see the day of Christ's appearance ; Matt. vi. 33. 19—21. 1 John ii. 15. Col. iii. 1—4. Rom. viii. 5—8. 1 Cor. ii. 13, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

And thus I have shewed you from the word of God, and the nature of Christianity, the true characters of the Confirmed Christian, and of the Weak Christian, and of the Seeming Christian.

The uses for which I have drawn up these characters, and which the reader is to make of them, are these :

1. Here the weak Christian and the hypocrite may see what manner of persons they ought to be. Not only how unsafe it is to remain in a state of hypocrisy, but also how uncomfortable, and unserviceable, and troublesome it is, to remain in a state of weakness

and diseasedness ; what a folly (and indeed a sign of hypocrisy) is it to think, 'If I had but grace enough to save me, I would desire no more, or I would be well content.' Are you content, if you have but life here, to difference you from the dead? If you were continually infants that must be fed, and carried, and made clean by others; or if you had a continual gout, or stone or leprosy, and lived in continual want and misery, you would think that life alone is not enough; and that '*non vivere tantum sed valere vita est*:' that life is uncomfortable when we have nothing but life, and all the delights of life are gone. He that lieth in continual pain and want is weary of his life, if he cannot separate it from those calamities. He that knoweth how necessary strength is, as well as life, to do any considerable service for God, and how many pains attend the diseases and infirmities of the weak, and what great dishonor cometh to Christ and religion, by the faults and childishness of many that shall be pardoned and saved, would certainly bestir him with all possible care to get out of this sick or infant state.

2. By this you may see who are the Strong Christians, and who are the weak. It is not always the man of learning and free expressions, that can speak longest and most wisely of holy things, that is the strong, confirmed Christian; but he that most excelleth in the love of God and man, and in a heavenly mind, and holy life. Nor is it he that is unlearned, or of a weak memory, or slow expression, that is the weakest Christian; but he that hath least love to God and man, and the most love to his carnal self, and to the world, and the strongest corruptions, and the weakest grace. Many a poor day-laborer, or woman that can scarce speak sense, is a stronger Christian (as being strong in faith, and love and patience, and humility, and mortification, and self-denial) than many great preachers and doctors of the church.

3. You see here what kind of men they be that we call the godly; and what that godliness is which we plead for, against the malicious serpentine generation. The liars would make men believe that by godliness we mean a few affected strains, or hypocritical shews, or heartless lip-service or singular opinions, in needless scrupulosity, or ignorant zeal: yea, a schism, or faction, or sedition, or rebellion, or what the devil please to say. If these sixty characters describe

any such thing, then I will not deny, that in the way that such men call heresy, faction, schism, singularity, so worship we the God of our fathers. But if not, the Lord rebuke thee Satan, and hasten the day when the 'lying lips shall be put to silence ;" Psal. cxxxi. 18. cxx. 2. cix. 2. Prov. xii. 19. 22. x. 18.

4. By this also you may see how inexcusable the enemies of Christianity and godliness are, and for what it is that they hate and injure it. Is there any thing in all this character of a Christian, that deserveth the suspicion or hatred of the world? What harm is there in it? Or what will it do against them? I may say to them of his servants as Christ did of himself: "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father ; for which of these works do ye stone me?" John x. 32. Many heavenly graces are in the sanctified believer : for which of these do you hate and injure him ! I know that goodness is so far in credit with human nature, that you will answer as the Jews did ; "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy ;" ver. 33. We hate them not for godliness, but for hypocrisy and sin. But if it be so indeed, 1. Speak not against godliness itself, nor against the strictest performance of our duty. 2. Yea, plead for godliness, and countenance and promote it while you speak against hypocrisy and sin. 3. And choose out the hypocrite whose character is here set before you ; and let him be the object of your enmity and distaste. Let it fall on those that are worldlings and time-servers, and will stretch their consciences to their carnal interest, and can do any thing to save their skin ; and being false to Christ, can hardly be true to any of their superiors, but only in subordination to themselves. As it is said of Constantius, that he commanded that all his servants should be turned out of their places that would not renounce Christianity. And when he had thereby tried them, he turned out all the apostates, and kept in the sincere, and told them, they could not be true to him, that were not true to their God and Savior. 4. And see that you be not hypocrites yourselves. You profess yourselves Christians ; and what is it to be a Christian indeed, you may here perceive. If any that fall under the character of hypocrites, or worse, shall vilify or hate the sincere Christians as hypocrites, what a horrid aggravation of their hypocrisy will it be ?

Indeed it is the best and strongest Christians that have most of the hatred both of the unbelieving and the hypocritical world. And for my own part I must confess, that the very observation of the universal implacable enmity, which is undeniably seen throughout the world, between the woman's and the serpent's seed (being such as is not found among any other sorts of men on other occasions,) doth not a little confirm my belief of the holy Scriptures, and seemeth to be an argument not well to be answered by any enemy of the Christian cause. That it should begin between the two first brothers that ever were born in the world, and stop in nothing lower than shedding the righteous blood of Abel, for no other cause, but because the works of Cain were evil, and his brother's righteous; 1 John iii. 12, 13. and that it should go down to the prophets, and Christ, and the apostles, and primitive saints, and continue to this day throughout the earth; and that the profession of the same religion doth not alter it, but rather enrage the enmity of hypocrites against all that are serious and sincere in the religion which they themselves profess: These are things that no good account can be given of, save only from the predictions and verities of the word of God.

5. Also you may hence perceive how exceedingly injurious hypocrites and scandalous Christians are, to the name of Christ, and cause of Christianity and godliness in the world. The blind, malicious enemies of faith and godliness, instead of judging them by the sacred rule, do look only to the professors, and think of religion as they think of them. If they see the professors of Christianity to be covetous, proud, usurpers, time-servers, self-exalters, cruel, schismatical, rebellious, they presently charge all this upon their religion; and godliness must bear the blame, when all comes but for want of godliness and religion. And all the world hath not done so much against these and all other sins, as Christ hath done. What if Christ's disciples strive who shall be the greatest, is it long of him who girdeth himself to wash and wipe their feet? and telleth them, that "except they be converted, and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of God?" Matt. xviii. 3. and telleth them, that though "the kings of the Gentiles do exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called

benefactors, yet ye shall not be so?" Luke xxii. 25, 26. Is it long of him that hath said to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock? Who hath set the elders such a lesson as you find in Acts xx. 2 Tim. iv. 1—3. 1 Tim. v. 17. If any called Christians should be truly schismatical, factious, or turbulent, is it long of him that hath prayed the Father that they may all be one? John xvii. 21—23. and hath so vehemently entreated them "that they speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among them, and that they be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment;" 1 Cor. vii. 10. and hath charged them to "mark them that cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they had learned, and to avoid them?" Rom. xvi. 16, 17. If any called Christians shall be seditious, or rebellious, or (as the Papists) believe, that the clergy are from under the jurisdiction of kings, and that the pope hath power to excommunicate princes, and absolve their subjects from their allegiance, and give their dominions to others, as it is decreed in the general council at the Lateran under Innocent the Third, Can. 3. is all this long of Christ, who hath paid tribute to Cæsar, and hath commanded that every soul be subject to the higher powers, and not resist, and this for conscience sake? Rom. xiii. 1—3. and hath bid his disciples rather to turn the other cheek, than to seek revenge? Luke vi. 29. and hath told them that they that use the sword (of rebellion, or revenge, or cruelty) shall perish by the sword? John xviii. 11. If any Christians will under pretence of religion, set up a cruel inquisition, or kill men to convert them, or become self-lovers, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, &c. is this long of him that hath forbid all this? 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. If for their own domination, lust or covetousness, men called Christians, will be worse than heathens and wolves to one another, is this long of him that hath made it his sheep-mark, by which we must be known to all men to be his disciples, that "we love one

another?" John xiii. 35. and hath told them, that if they "bite and devour one another, they shall be devoured one of another?" (Gal. v. 15.) and hath blessed the merciful, as those that shall find mercy (Matt. v. 7.,) and hath told men that what they do to his little ones, shall be taken as if it were done to himself (Matt. xxv.), and hath commanded the "strong to bear with the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves" (Rom. xv. 1—3.), and "to receive one another as Christ received us" (ver. 7.), and hath told those that offend but "one of his little ones," that it "were good for that man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matt. xviii. 6.,) and hath told him that "smiteth his fellow servants, that his Lord will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" chap. xxiv. 48—51. I wonder what men would have Christ do, to free himself and the Christian religion from the imputation of the sins of the hypocrites, and the weak distempered Christians. Would they have him yet make stricter laws (when they hate these for being so strict already,) or would they have him condemn sinners to more grievous punishment, when they are already offended at the severity of his threatenings? O what an unrighteous generation are his enemies that blame the law, because men break it, and blame religion, because many are not religious enough. As if the sun must be hated, because that shadows and dungeons do want light; or life and health must be hated, because many are sick and pained by their diseases! But Christ will shortly stop all the mouths of these unreasonable men; and O how easily will he justify himself, his laws, and all his holy ways, when all iniquity shall be for ever silent. And though "it must needs be that offences come, yet wo to the world because of offences, and wo to the man by whom they come."

The wrong that Christ receiveth from hypocrites and scandalous Christians (of all ranks and places) is not to be estimated. These are the causes that Christianity and godliness are so contemptible in the eyes of the world! that Jews, and heathens, and Mahometans, are still unconverted and deriders of the faith; because they see

such scandalous tyranny and worship among the Papists, and such scandalous lives among the greatest part of professed Christians in the world; whereas, if the papal tyranny were turned into the Christian ministry (Luke xxii. 25—27. 1 Tim. v. 17.), and their irrational sopperies, and historical, hypocritical worship were changed into a reverent, rational, and spiritual worship; and the cruel, carnal, worldly lives of men called Christians, were changed into self-denial, love, and holiness; in a word, if Christians were Christians indeed, and such as I have here described from their rule, what a powerful means would it be of the conversion of all the unbelieving world? Christianity would then be in the eye of the world, as the sun in its brightness, and the glory of it would dazzle the eyes of the beholders, and draw in millions to inquire after Christ, who are now driven from him by the sins of hypocrites and scandalous believers.

And this doth not contradict what I said before of the enmity of the world to holiness, and that the best are most abused by the ungodly: For even this enmity must be rationally cured, as by the error of reason it is fed. God useth by the power of intellectual light, to bring all those out of darkness whom he saveth, and so bringeth them from the power of Satan to himself; Acts xxvi. 18. Men hate not holiness as good, but as misconceived to be evil. Evil, I say, to them, because it is opposite to their sensual pleasures, which they take to be their chiefest good. And the way of curing their enmity, is by shewing them their error; and that is, by shewing them the excellency and necessity of that which they unreasonably distate; Acts xxvi. 9—11. 14. 19. Luke xv. 13—16. Acts ii. 36, 37.

6. Lastly; in these characters you have some help in the work of self-examination, for the trial both of the truth and strength of grace. I suppose it will be objected, that in other treatises, I have reduced all the infallible marks of grace to a smaller number. To which I answer, I still say, that *the predominancy or prevalency of the interest of God as our God, and Christ as our Savior, and the Spirit as our Sanctifier, in the estimation of the understanding, the resolved choice of the will, and the government of the life, against all the worldly interest of the flesh, is the only infallible sign of a justified,*

regenerate soul. But this whole hath many parts, and it is abundance of particulars materially in which this sincerity is to be found. Even all the sixty characters which I have here named, are animated by that one, and contained in it. And I think to the most the full description of a Christian in his essential and integral parts (yet shewing which are indeed essential) is the best way to acquaint them with the nature of Christianity, and to help them in the trial of themselves. And as it were an abuse of human nature, for a painter to draw the picture of a man without arms, or legs, or nose or eyes, because he may be a man without them; so would it have been in me to draw only a maimed picture of a Christian, because a maimed Christian is a Christian. Yet, because there are so many maimed Christians in the world, I have also shewed you their lamentable defects: not in a manner which tendeth to encourage them in their sins and wants under pretence of comforting them, but in that manner which may best excite them to their duty, in order to their recovery, without destroying their necessary supporting comforts.

O happy church, and state, and family, which are composed of such confirmed Christians! where the predominant temperature is such as I have here described! Yea, happy is the place where magistrates and ministers are such; who are the vital parts of state and church, and the instruments appointed to communicate these perfections to the rest. But how much more happy is the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God, where the perfected spirits of the just, in perfect life, and light, and love, are perfectly beholding, and admiring, and praising, and pleasing the eternal God, their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier forever! where the least and meanest is greater and more perfect than the confirmed Christian here described; and where hypocrisy is utterly excluded, and imperfection ceaseth, with scandal, censures, uncharitableness, divisions, and all its other sad effects; and where the souls that thirsted after righteousness shall be fully satisfied, and love God more than they can now desire, and never grieve themselves or others with their wants or weaknesses, or misdoings any more. And, O blessed day, when our blessed Head shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, and shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all

them that now believe ; whose weakness here occasioned his dishonor, and their own contempt ! When the seed of grace is grown up into glory, and all the world, whether they will or not, shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not ; between the clean and the unclean, and between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath. And though now “ our life is hid with Christ in God,” and it yet “ appear-eth not (to the sight of ourselves or others) what we shall be ; yet then when Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory ;” Heb. xii. 22, 23. Rev. xxii. 3—5. 14, 15. xxi. 3, 4. 8. 2 Thess. i. 9, 10. Matt. v. 4, 6. Mal. iii. 18. Eccles. ix. 2. 1 John iii. 2, 3. Col. iii. 3, 4. Away then my soul from this dark, deceitful, and vexatious world ! Love not thy diseases, thy fetters and calamities. Groan daily to thy Lord, and earnestly groan to be clothed upon with thy house that is from heaven (2 Cor. v. 2. 4.), that mortality may be swallowed up of life ! Join in the harmonious desires of the creatures, who groan to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; Rom. viii. 20—22. “ Abide in him, and walk in righteousness, that when he shall appear, thou mayest have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming ;” 1 John iii. 28, 29. Join not with the evil servants, who say in their hearts, “ Our Lord delayeth his coming, and begin to smite their fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken ; whose Lord shall come in a day when they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of, and shall cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth ;” Matt. xxiv. 38—51. O watch and pray that thou enter not into temptation ! and be patient, for the Judge is at the door ! Lift up thy head with earnest expectation, O my soul, for thy redemption draweth near ! Rejoice in hope before thy Lord, for he cometh ; he cometh to judge the world in righteousness and truth. Behold he cometh quickly, though faith be failing, and iniquity abound, and love waxeth cold, and scorners say, ‘ Where is the promise of his coming !’ Make haste O thou whom my soul desireth, and come in glory as thou first camest in humility, and conform them to thyself in glory, whom thou

madest conformable to thy sufferings and humility! Let the holy city New Jerusalem be prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and let God's tabernacle be with men, that he may dwell with them and be their God, and wipe away their tears, and death, and sorrow, and crying; and pain may be no more, but former things may pass away! Keep up our faith, our hope, our love! and daily vouchsafe us some beams of thy directing, consolatory light in this our darkness! and be not as a stranger to thy scattered flock, in this desolate wilderness! But let them hear thy voice, and find thy presence, and have such conversation with thee in heaven, in the exercise of faith and hope, and love, which is agreeable to their low and distant state. Testify to their souls that thou art their Savior and Head, and that they abide in thee by the Spirit which thou hast given them, abiding, and overcoming in them, and as thy agent preparing them for eternal life. O let not our darkness, nor any strangeness feed our odious unbelief! O shew thyself more clearly to thy redeemed ones! And come and dwell in our hearts by faith! And by holy love, let us dwell in God, and God in us, that we grope not after him, as those that worship an unknown God. O save us from temptation! And if the messenger of Satan be sent to buffet us, let thy strength be manifested in our weakness, and thy grace appear sufficient for us. And give us the patience which thou tellest us we need, that having done thy will, we may inherit the promise. And bring us to the sight and fruition of our Creator, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.

MR. BAXTER'S
DYING THOUGHTS

UPON

PHILIPPIANS i. 23.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

**WRITTEN FOR HIS OWN USE IN THE LATTER TIMES OF HIS
CORPORAL PAINS AND WEAKNESS.**

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

READER,

I HAVE no other use for a preface to this book, but to give you a true excuse for its publication. I wrote it for myself, unresolved whether any one should ever see it, but at last inclined to leave that to the will of my executors, to publish or suppress it when I am dead, as they saw cause. But my person being seized on, and my library, and all my goods distrained on by constables, and sold, and I constrained to relinquish my house, (for preaching and being in London,) I knew not what to do with multitudes of manuscripts that had long lain by me; having no house to go to, but a narrow hired lodging with strangers: wherefore I cast away whole volumes, which I could not carry away, both controversies and letters practical, and cases of conscience, but having newly lain divers weeks, night and day, in waking torments, nephritic and colic, after other long pains and languor, I took this book with me in my removal, for my own use in my further sickness. Three weeks after, falling into another extreme fit, and expecting death, where I had no friend with me to commit my papers to, merely lest it should be lost, I thought best to give it to the printer. I think it is so much of the work of all men's lives to prepare to die with safety and comfort, that the same thoughts may be needful for others that are so for me. If any mislike the title, as if it imported that the author is dead, let him know that I die daily, and that which quickly will be, almost is: it is suited to my own use; they that it is unsuitable to, may pass it by. If those men's lives were spent in serious, preparing thoughts of death, who are now studying to destroy each other, and tear in pieces a distressed land, they would prevent much dolorous repentance.

RICHARD BAXTER.

THE exercise of three sorts of love, to God, to others, and to myself afford me a threefold satisfaction, conjunct, to be willing to depart.

I. I am sure my departure will be the fulfilling of that will which is love itself, which I am bound, above all things, to love and please, and which is the beginning, rule, and end of all. Antonine could hence fetch good thoughts of death.

II. The world dieth not with me when I die ; nor the church, nor the praise and glory of God, which he will have in and from this world unto the end : and if I love others as myself, their lives and comforts will now be to my thoughts, as if I were to live myself in them. God will be praised and honored by posterity when I am dead and gone. Were I to be annihilated, this would comfort me now, if I lived and died in perfect love.

III. But a better glorious world is before me, into which I hope, by death, to be translated, whither all these three sorts of love should wrap up the desires of my ascending soul ; even the love of myself, that I may be fully happy ; the love of the triumphant church, Christ, angels, and glorified man, and the glory of all the universe, which I shall see ; and above all, the love of the most glorious God, infinite life, and light, and love, the ultimate, amiable object of man's love ; in whom to be perfectly pleased and delighted, and to whom to be perfectly pleasing forever, is the chief and ultimate end of me, and of the highest, wisest, and best of creatures. Amen.

THE INTRODUCTION.

Phil. i. 23.

For I am in a strait betwixt two, &c.

I WRITE for myself, and therefore, supposing the sense of the text, shall only observe what is useful to my heart and practice.

It was a happy state into which grace had brought this apostle, who saw so much, not only tolerable, but greatly desirable, both in living and dying. To live, to him, was Christ, that is, Christ's interest or work. To die would be gain, that is, his own interest and reward. His strait was not whether it would be good to live or good to depart, both were good, but which was more desirable was the doubt.

1. *Quest.* But was there any doubt to be made between Christ's interest and his own? *Ans.* No, if it had been a full and fixed competition; but by Christ, or Christ's interest, he meaneth his work for his church's interest in this world; but he knew that Christ also had an interest in his saints above, and that he could raise up more to serve him here; yet, because he was to judge by what appeared, and he saw a defect of such on earth, this did turn the scales in his choice; and for the work of Christ and his church's good, he more inclined to the delay of his reward, by self-denial; yet knowing that the delay would tend to its increase. It is useful to me here to note,

That, even in this world, short of death, there is some good so much to be regarded, as may justly prevail with believers to prefer it before the present hastening of their reward.

I the rather note this, that no temptation carry me into that extreme, of taking nothing but heaven to be worthy of our minding or regard, and so to cast off the world in a sinful sort, on pretence of mortification, and a heavenly mind, and life.

I. As to the sense, the meaning is not that any thing on earth is better than heaven, or simply, and in itself, to be preferred before it. The end is better than the means as such, and perfection better than imperfection.

But the present use of the means may be preferred sometimes before the present possession of the end, and the use of means for a higher end may be preferred before the present possession of a lower end, and every thing hath its season. Planting, and sowing, and building, are not so good as reaping, and fruit-gathering, and dwelling, but in their season, they must be first done.

II. *Quest.* But what is there so desirable in this life?

Answ. 1. While it continueth, it is the fulfilling of the will of God, who will have us here; and that is best which God willeth.

II. The life to come dependeth upon this, as the life of man in the world upon his generation in the womb; or as the reward upon the work; or the runner's or soldier's prize upon his race or fighting; or as the merchant's gain upon his voyage. Heaven is won or lost on earth. The possession is there, but the preparation is here. Christ will judge all men according to their works on earth. "Well done, good and faithful servant," must go before "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," goeth before "the crown of righteousness which God, the righteous judge, will give." All that ever must be done for salvation by us, must here be done. It was on earth that Christ himself wrought the work of our redemption, fulfilled all righteousness, became our ransom, and paid the price of our salvation, and it is here that our part is to be done.

And the bestowing of the reward is God's work, who, we are sure, will never fail. There is no place for the least suspicion or fear of his misdoing, or failing, in any of his undertaken work. But the danger and fear is of our own miscarrying, lest we be not found capable of receiving what God will certainly give to all that are disposed receivers. To distrust God is heinous sin and folly, but to distrust ourselves we have great cause. So that if we will make sure of heaven, it must be by giving all diligence to make firm our title, our calling, and our election, here on earth. If we fear hell, we must fear being prepared for it.

And it is great and difficult work that must be here done. It is here that we must be cured of all damning sin; that we must be regenerate and new born; that we must be pardoned and justified by

faith. It is here that we must be united to Christ, made wise to salvation, renewed by his Spirit, and conformed to his likeness. It is here that we must overcome all the temptations of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and perform all the duties towards God and man, that must be rewarded. It is here that Christ must be believed in with the heart to righteousness, and with the mouth confessed to salvation. It is here that we must suffer with him, that we may reign with him, and be faithful to the death, that we may receive the crown of life. Here we must so run that we may obtain.

III. Yea, we have greater work here to do than mere securing our own salvation. We are members of the world and church, and we must labor to do good to man. We are trusted with our Master's talents for his service, in our places to do our best to propagate his truth and grace and church; and to bring home souls, and honor his cause, and edify his flock, and further the salvation of as many as we can. All this is to be done on earth, if we will secure the end of all in heaven.

Use. 1. It is, then, an error (though it is but few, I think, that are guilty of it,) to think that all religion lieth in minding only the life to come, and disregarding all things in this present life, all true Christians must seriously mind both the end and the means, or way. If they mind not, believingly, the end, they will never be faithful in the use of means. If they mind not, and use not diligently, the means, they will never obtain the end. None can use earth well that prefer not heaven, and none come to heaven, at age, that are not prepared by well using earth. Heaven must have the deepest esteem, and habitual love, and desire, and joy; but earth must have more of our daily thoughts for present practice. A man that travel-eth to the most desirable home, hath a habit of desire to it all the way, but his present business is his travel; and horse, and company, and inns, and ways, and weariness, &c., may take up more of his sensible thoughts, and of his talk, and action, than his home.

Use 2. I have oft marvelled to find David, in the Psalms, and other saints, before Christ's coming, to have expressed so great a sense of the things of this present life, and to have said so little of another; to have made so great a matter of prosperity, dominions, and vic-

tories, on one hand, and of enemies, success, and persecution, on the other. But I consider that it was not for mere personal, carnal interest, but for the church of God, and for his honor, word and worship. And they knew that if things go well with us on earth, they will be sure to go well in heaven. If the militant church prosper in holiness, there is no doubt but it will triumph in glory. God will be sure to do his part in receiving souls, if they be here prepared for his receipt. And Satan doth much of his damning work by men; if we escape their temptations, we escape much of our danger. If idolaters prospered, Israel was tempted to idolatry. The Greek church is almost swallowed up by Turkish prosperity and dominion. Most follow the powerful and prosperous side. And, therefore for God's cause, and for heavenly, everlasting interest, our own state, but much more the church's, must be greatly regarded here on earth.

Indeed, if earth be desired only for earth, and prosperity loved but for the present welfare of the flesh, it is the certain mark of damning carnality, and an earthly mind. But to desire peace, and prosperity, and power, to be in the hands of wise and faithful men, for the sake of souls, and the increase of the church, and the honor of God, that his name may be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will done on earth, as it is in heaven; this is to be the chief of our prayers to God.

Use 3. Be not unthankful, then, O my soul, for the mercies of this present life, for those to thy body, to thy friends, to the land of thy nativity, and especially to the church of God.

1. This body is so nearly united to thee, that it must needs be a great help, or hindrance. Had it been more afflicted, it might have been a discouraging clog; like a tired horse, in a journey, or an ill tool to a workman, or an untuned instrument in music. A sick or bad servant in an house is a great trouble, and a bad wife much more, but thy body is nearer thee than either, and will be more of thy concern.

And yet if it had been more strong and healthful, sense and appetite would have been strong, and lust would have been strong, and therefore danger would have been greater, and victory and salvation much more difficult. Even weak senses and temptations have too oft prevailed. How knowest thou, then, what stronger might have done? When I see a thirsty man in a fever or dropsy, and especially

when I see strong and healthful youths, bred up in fulness, and among temptations, how mad they are in sin, and how violently they are carried to it, bearing down God's rebukes, and conscience, and parents, and friends, and all regard to their salvation, it tells me how great a mercy I had, even in a body not liable to their case.

And many a bodily deliverance hath been of great use to my soul, renewing my time, and opportunity, and strength, for service, and bringing frequent and fresh reports of the love of God.

If bodily mercies were not of great use to the soul, Christ would not so much have showed his saving love, by healing all manner of diseases, as he did. Nor would God promise us a resurrection of the body, if a congruous body did not further the welfare of the soul.

2. And I am obliged to great thankfulness to God for the mercies of this life which he hath showed to my friends; that which furthers their joy should increase mine. I ought to rejoice with them that rejoice. Nature and grace teach us to be glad when our friends are well, and prosper, though all in order to better things than bodily welfare.

3. And such mercies of this life to the land of our habitation must not be undervalued. The want of them are parts of God's threatened curse; and godliness hath the promise of this life, and of that which is to come, and so is profitable to all things. And when God sends on a land the plagues of famine, pestilence, war, persecution, especially a famine of the word of God, it is a great sin to be insensible of it. If any shall say, 'while heaven is sure, we have no cause to accuse God, or to cast away comfort, hope, or duty,' they say well; but if they say, 'because heaven is all, we must make light of all that befalleth us on earth,' they say amiss.

Good princes, magistrates, and public-spirited men that promote the safety, peace, and true prosperity of the commonwealth, do hereby very much befriend religion, and men's salvation; and are greatly to be loved and honored by all. If the civil state, called the commonwealth, do miscarry, or fall into ruin and calamity, the church will fare the worse for it, as the soul doth by the ruins of the body. The Turkish, Muscovite, and such other empires, tell us, how the church consumeth, and dwindles away into contempt, or withered

ceremony and formality, where tyranny brings slavery, beggary, or long persecution on the subjects. Doubtless, divers passages in the Revelations contain the church's glorifying of God, for their power and prosperity on earth, when emperors became Christians: what else can be meant well by Rev. v. 10, "Hath made us kings and priests to God, and we shall reign on the earth;" but that Christians shall be brought from under heathen persecution, and have rule and sacred honor in the world, some of them being princes; some honored church guides; and all a peculiar, honored people. And had not Satan found out that cursed way of getting wicked men, that hate true godliness and peace, into the sacred places of princes and pastors, to do his work against Christ, as in Christ's name; surely no good Christians would have grudged at the power of rulers of state, or church. Sure I am, that many, called fifth-monarchy-men, seem to make this their great hope, that rule shall be in the hands of righteous men; and I think, most religious parties would rejoice if those had very great power, whom they take to be the best and truest men; which shows that it is not the greatness of power in most princes, or sound bishops, that they dislike, but the badness, real or supposed, of those whose power they dislike: who will blame power to do good?

Sure the three first and great petitions of the Lord's prayer include some temporal welfare of the world and church, without which the spiritual rarely prospereth extensively, (though intensively in a few it may,) since miracles ceased.

4. Be thankful, therefore, for all the church's mercies here on earth; for all the protection of magistracy; the plenty of preachers; the preservation from enemies; the restraint of persecution; the concord of Christians; and increase of godliness; which in this land it hath had in our ages; notwithstanding all Satan's malignant rage, and all the bloody wars that have interrupted our tranquility. How many psalms of joyful thanksgiving be there for Israel's deliverances, and the preservation of Zion, and God's worship in his sanctuary. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love it. Especially, that the gospel is continued, while so many rage against it, is a mercy not to be made light of.

Use 4. Be especially thankful, O my soul, that God hath made any use of thee, for the service of his church on earth. My God, my soul for this doth magnify thee, and my spirit rejoiceth in the review of thy great undeserved mercy! Oh! what am I, when thou tookest up from the dunghill or low obscurity, that I should live, myself, in the constant relish of thy sweet and sacred truth, and with such encouraging success communicate it to others? That I must say now my public work seems ended, that these forty-three or forty-four years, I have no reason to think that ever I labored in vain! O with what gratitude must I look upon all places where I lived and labored; but, above all, that place that had my strength. I bless thee for the great numbers gone to heaven, and for the continuance of piety, humility, concord, and peace among them.

And for all that by my writings have received any saving light and grace. O my God! let not my own heart be barren while I labor in thy husbandry, to bring others unto holy fruit. Let me not be a stranger to the life and power of that saving truth which I have done so much to communicate to others. O let not my own words and writings condemn me as void of that divine and heavenly nature and life which I have said so much for to the world.

Use 5. Stir up, then, O my soul, thy sincere desires, and all thy faculties, to do the remnant of the work of Christ appointed thee on earth, and then joyfully wait for the heavenly perfection in God's own time.

Thou canst truly say, "To live, to me, is Christ." It is his work for which thou livest: thou hast no other business in the world; but thou dost his work with the mixture of many oversights and imperfections, and too much troublest thy thoughts distrustfully about God's part, who never faileth; if thy work be done, be thankful for what is past, and that thou art come so near the port of rest; if God will add any more to thy days, serve him with double alacrity, now thou art so near the end: the prize is almost within sight: time is swift, and short. Thou hast told others that there is no working in the grave, and that it must be now or never. Though the conceit of meriting of commutative justice be no better than madness, dream not that God will save the wicked, no, nor equally reward the sloth-

ful and the diligent, because Christ's righteousness was perfect. Paternal justice maketh difference according to that worthiness which is so denominated by the law of grace. And as sin is its own punishment, holiness and obedience is much of its own reward. Whatever God appointeth thee to do, see that thou do it sincerely, and with all thy might. If sin dispose men to be angry because it is detected, disgraced, and resisted, if God be pleased, their wrath should be patiently borne, who will shortly be far more angry with themselves. If slander and obloquy survive, so will the better effects on those that are converted; and there is no comparison between these. I shall not be hurt, when I am with Christ, by the calumnies of men on earth; but the saving benefit will, by converted sinners, be enjoyed everlastingly. Words and actions are transient things, and, being once past, are nothing; but the effects of them, on an immortal soul, may be endless. All the sermons that I have preached are nothing now; but the grace of God, on sanctified souls, is the beginning of eternal life. It is unspeakable mercy to be sincerely thus employed with success; therefore, I had reason, all this while, to be in Paul's strait, and make no haste in my desires to depart. The crown will come in its due time; and eternity is long enough to enjoy it, how long soever it be delayed: but if I will do that which must obtain it for myself and others, it must be quickly done, before my declining sun be set.

O that I had no worse causes of my unwillingness yet to die, than my desire to do the work of life for my own and other men's salvation; and to finish my course with joy, and the ministry committed to me by the Lord.

Use 6. And as it is on earth that I must do good to others, so it must be in a manner suited to their state on earth. Souls are here closely united to bodies, by which they must receive much good or hurt: do good to men's bodies, if thou wouldest do good to their souls; say not, things corporeal are worthless trifles, for which the receivers will be never the better; they are things that nature is easily sensible of; and sense is the passage to the mind and will. Dost not thou find what a help it is to thyself to have, at any time, any ease and alacrity of body? And what a burden and hindrance pains

and cares are? Labor, then, to free others from such burdens and temptations, and be not regardless of them. If thou must rejoice with them that rejoice, and mourn with them that mourn, further thy own joy in furthering theirs; and avoid thy own sorrows, in avoiding or curing theirs.

But, alas! what power hath selfishness in most. How easily do we bear our brethren's pains, reproaches, wants, and afflictions, in comparison of our own: how few thoughts, and how little cost or labor, do we use for their supply, in comparison of what we do for ourselves. Nature, indeed, teacheth us to be most sensible of our own case; but grace tells us, that we should not make so great a difference as we do, but should love our neighbors as ourselves.

Use 7. And now, O my soul, consider how mercifully God hath dealt with thee, that thy strait should be between two conditions so desirable. I shall either die speedily, or stay yet longer upon earth; whichever it be, it will be a merciful and comfortable state; that it is desirable to depart and be with Christ, I must not doubt, and shall anon more copiously consider. And if my abode on earth yet longer be so great a mercy as to be put in the balance against my present possession of heaven, surely it must be a state which obligeth me to great thankfulness to God, and comfortable acknowledgment; and surely it is not my pain, or sickness, my sufferings from malicious men, that should make this life on earth unacceptable, while God will continue it. Paul had his prick or thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and suffered more from men (though less in his health) than I have done; and yet he gloried in such infirmities, and rejoiced in his tribulations, and was in a strait between living and dying, yea, rather chose to live yet longer.

Alas! it is another kind of strait that most of the world are in. The strait of most is between the desire of life for fleshly interest, and the fear of death, as ending their felicity. The strait of many is, between a tiring world and body, which maketh them weary of living, and the dreadful prospect of future danger, which makes them afraid of dying; if they live it is in misery; if they must die, they are afraid of greater misery. Which way ever they look, behind or before them, to this world or the next, fear and trouble is their lot. Yea, many an upright Christian, through the weakness of his trust

in God, doth live in this perplexed strait ; weary of living, and afraid of dying ; between grief and fear, they are pressed continually. But Paul's strait was between two joys ; which of them he should desire most : and if that be my case, what should much interrupt my peace or pleasure ? If I live, it is for Christ ; for his work, and for his church ; for preparation for my own and others' everlasting felicity : and should any suffering, which maketh me not unserviceable, make me impatient with such a work, and such a life ? If I die presently, it is my gain ; God who appointeth me my work, doth limit my time, and sure his glorious reward can never be unseasonable, or come too soon, if it be the time that he appointeth. When I first engaged myself to preach the gospel, I reckoned (as probable) but upon one or two years ; and God hath continued me yet above forty-four : (with such interruptions as others in these times have had ;) and what reason have I now to be unwilling, either to live or die ? God's service hath been so sweet to me ; that it hath overcome the trouble of constant pains, or weakness, of the flesh, and all that men have said or done against me.

But the following crown exceeds this pleasure, more than I am here capable to conceive. There is some trouble in all this pleasant work, from which the soul and flesh would rest ; and blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord ; even so saith the spirit ; for they rest from their labors and their works follow them.

But, O my soul, what needest thou be troubled in this kind of strait ? It is not left to thee to choose whether or when thou wilt live or die. It is God that will determine it, who is infinitely fitter to choose than thou. Leave, therefore, his own work to himself, and mind that which is thine ; whilst thou livest, live to Christ ; and when thou diest, thou shalt die to Christ ; even into his blessed hands : so live that thou mayest say, " It is Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me ; " and then, as thou hast lived in the comfort of hope, thou shalt die unto the comfort of vision and fruition. And when thou canst say, " He is the God whose I am, and whom I serve," thou mayest boldly add, ' and whom I trust, and to whom I commend my departing soul ; and I know whom I have trusted.'

MR. BAXTER'S

DYING THOUGHTS.

Phil. i. 23.

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. (Or, for this is much rather to be preferred, or better.)

SECT. 1. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such a one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?" saith Job, xiv. 1—3. As a watch when it is wound up, or as a candle newly lighted, so man, newly conceived or born, beginneth a motion, which, incessantly hasteth to its appointed period. And an action, and its time that is past, is nothing; so vain a thing would man be, and so vain his life, were it not for the hopes of a more durable life, which this referreth to. But those hopes, and the means, do not only difference a believer from an infidel, but a man from a beast. When Solomon describeth the difference, in respect to the time and things of this life only, he truly tells us, that one end here befalling both, doth show that both are here but vanity, but man's vexation is greater than the beasts'. And Paul truly saith of Christians, that if our hope were only in this life, (that is, in the time and things of this life and world,) we were, of all men, the most miserable. Though even in this life, as related to a better, and as we are exercised about things of a higher nature than the concerns of temporal life, we are far happier than any worldlings.

Sect. 2. Being to speak to myself, I shall pass by all the rest of the matter of this text, and suppose its due explication, and spread before my soul only the doctrine and uses of these two propositions contained in it. I. That the souls of believers, when departed hence,

shall be with Christ. II. That so to be with Christ is far better for them than to be here in the body.

Sect. 3. I. Concerning the first, my thoughts shall keep this order. *I.* I shall consider the necessity of believing it. *II.* Whether it be best believing it, without consideration of the proofs or difficulties. *III.* The certainty of it manifested for the exercise of faith.

Sect. 4. *I.* Whether the words signify that we shall be in the same place with Christ (which Grotius groundlessly denieth) or only in his hand, and care, and love, I will not stay to dispute. Many other texts concurring, do assure us that "we shall be with him where he is." (John xii. 26, and xvii. 24, &c.) At least, "with him," can mean no less than a state of communion, and a participation of felicity. And to believe such a state of happiness for departed souls, is of manifold necessity, or use.

Sect. 5. i. If this be not soundly believed, a man must live besides, or below, the end of life. He must have a false end, or be uncertain what should be his end.

I know it may be objected, that if I make it my end to please God, by obeying him, and doing all the good I can, and trust him with my soul, and future estate, as one that is utterly uncertain what he will do with me, I have an end intended, which will make me godly, charitable, and just, and happy, so far as I am made for happiness; for the pleasing of God is the right end of all.

But, 1. Must I desire to please him no better than I do in this imperfect state, in which I have and do so much which is displeasing to him? He that must desire to please him, must desire to please him perfectly; and our desire of our ultimate end must have no bounds, or check. Am I capable of pleasing God no better than by such a sinful life as this?

2. God hath made the desire of our own felicity so necessary to the soul of man, that it cannot be expected that our desire to please him should be separated from this.

3. Therefore, both in respect of God, as the end, and of our felicity, as our second end, we must believe that he is the beatifying rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

For, 1. If we make such an ill description of God, as that he will turn our pleasing him to our loss, or will not turn it to our gain and welfare, or that we know not whether he will do so or not, it will hinder our love, and trust, and joy, in him, by which we must please him, and, consequently, hinder the alacrity, and soundness, and constancy, of our obedience.

2. And it will much dismiss that self-love which must excite us, and it will take off part of our necessary end. And I think the objectors would confess, that if they have no certainty what God will do with them, they must have some probability and hope before they can be sincerely devoted here to please him.

Sect. 6. And, 1. If a man be but uncertain what he should make the end of his life, or what he should live for, how can he pitch upon an uncertain end? And if he waver so as to have no end, he can use no means; and if end and means be all laid by, the man liveth not as a man, but as a brute: and what a torment must it be to a considering mind to be uncertain what to intend and do in all the the tenor and actions of his life? Like a man going out at his door, not knowing whither or what to do, or which way to go: either he will stand still, or move as brutes do, by present sense, or as a wind-mill, or weathercock, as he is moved.

Sect. 7. 2. But if he pitch upon a wrong end, it may yet be worse than none; for he will but do hurt, or make work for repentance: and all the actions of his life must be formally wrong, how good soever, materially, if the end of them be wrong.

Sect. 8. ii. And if I fetch them not from this end, and believe not in God as a rewarder of his servants, in a better life, what motives shall I have, which in our present difficulties, will be sufficient to cause me to live a holy, yea, or a truly honest, life? All piety and honesty, indeed, is good, and goodness is desirable for itself: but the goodness of a means is its aptitude for the end; and we have here abundance of impediments, competitors, diversions, and temptations, and difficulties of many sorts; and all these must be overcome by him that will live in piety or honesty: and our natures, we find, are diseased, and greatly indisposed to unquestionable duties; and will they ever discharge them, and conquer all these difficulties and temp-

tations, if the necessary motive be not believed? Duty to God and man is accidentally hard and costly to the flesh, though amiable in itself. It may cost us our estates, our liberties, our lives. The world is not so happy as commonly to know good men from bad, or to encourage piety and virtue, or to forbear opposing them. And who will let go his present welfare, without some hope of better, as a reward? Men use not to serve God for nought; nor that think it will be their loss to serve him.

Sect. 9. A life of *sin* will not be avoided upon *lower* ends and motives: nay, those lower ends, when alone, will be a constant sin themselves. A preferring vanity to glory, the creature to God, and a setting our heart on that which will never make us happy: and when lust and appetite incline men, strongly and constantly, to their several objects, what shall sufficiently restrain them, except the greater and more durable delights or motives fetched from preponderating things? Lust and appetite distinguish not between lawful and unlawful. We may see in the brutish politics of Benedictus Spinoza, in his Tractat. Theolog. Polit., whither the principles of infidelity tend. If sin so overspread the earth, that the whole world is as drowned in wickedness, notwithstanding all the hopes and fears of a life to come, what would it do were there no such hopes and fears?

Sect. 10. iii. And no mercy can be truly known and estimated, nor rightly used and improved, by him that seeth not its tendency to the end, and perceiveth not that it leadeth to a better life, and useth it not thereunto. God dealeth more bountifully with us than worldlings understand. He giveth us all the mercies of this life, as helps to an immortal state of glory, and as earnest of it. Sensualists know not what a soul is, nor what soul mercies are; and, therefore, not what the soul of all bodily mercies are, but take up only with the carcass, shell or shadow. If the king would give me a lordship, and send me a horse, or coach to carry me to it, and I should only ride about the fields for my pleasure, and make no other use of it, should I not undervalue and lose the principal benefit of my horse or coach? No wonder if unbelievers be unthankful, when they know not at all that part of God's mercies which is the life and real excellency of them.

Sect. 11. iv. And, alas! how should I bear with comfort the sufferings of this wretched life, without the hopes of a life with Christ? What should support and comfort me under my bodily languishings and pains, my weary hours, and my daily experience of the vanity and vexation of all things under the sun, had I not a prospect of a comfortable end of all? I that have lived in the midst of great and precious mercies, have all my life had something to do to overcome the temptation of wishing that I had never been born, and had never overcome it but by the belief of a blessed life hereafter. Solomon's sense of vanity and vexation hath long made all the business, and and wealth, and honor, and pleasure, of this world, as such, appear such a dream and shadow to me, that were it not for the end, I could not have much differenced men's sleeping and their waking thoughts, nor have much more have valued the waking than the sleeping part of life, but should have thought it a kind of happiness to have slept from the birth unto the death. Children cry when they come into the world; and I am often sorry when I am awakened out of a quiet sleep, especially to the business of an unquiet day. We should be strongly tempted, in our considering state, to murmur at our Creator, as dealing much hardlier by us than by the brutes, if we must have had all those cares, and griefs, and fears, by the knowledge of what we want, and the prospect of death, and future evils, which they are exempted from, and had not, withal, had the hopes of a future felicity to support us. Seneca and his stoics had no better argument to silence such murmurers who believed not a better life, than to tell them, that if this life had more evil than good, and they thought God did them wrong, they might remedy themselves by ending it when they would. But that would not cure the repinings of a nature which found itself necessarily weary of the miseries of life, and yet afraid of dying. And it is no great wonder that many thought that pre-existent souls were put into these bodies as a punishment of something done in a former life, while they foresaw not the hoped end of all our fears and sorrows. 'O how contemptible a thing is man!' saith the same Seneca; 'unless he lift up himself above human things.' Therefore, saith Solomon, when he had glutted himself with all temporal pleasures, "I hated life, because the work that is wrought under

the sun is greivous to me ; for all is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Eccles. ii. 17.)

Sect. 12. *II.* I have often thought whether an implicit belief of a future happiness, without any search into its nature, and thinking of any thing that can be said against it, or the searching, trying way, be better. On the one side, I have knowh many godly women that never disputed the matter, but served God, comfortably, to a very old age, (between eighty and one hundred,) to have lived many years in a cheerful readiness and desire of death, and such as few learned, studious men do ever attain to in that degree, who, no doubt, had this as a divine reward of their long and faithful service of God, and trusting in him. On the other side, a studious man can hardly keep off all objections, or secure his mind against the suggestions of difficulties and doubts ; and if they come in, they must be answered, seeing we give them half a victory if we cast them off before we can answer them. And a faith that is not upheld by such evidence of truth as reason can discern and justify, is oft joined with much secret doubting, which men dare not open, but do not, therefore, overcome, and its weakness may have a weakening deficiency, as to all the graces and duties which should be strengthened by it. And who knoweth how soon a temptation from Satan, or infidels, or our own dark hearts, may assault us, which will not, without such evidence and resolving light, be overcome ? And yet many that try, and reason, and dispute most, have not the strongest, or most powerful faith.

Sect. 13. And my thoughts of this have had this issue. 1. There is a great difference between that light which showeth us the thing itself, and that artificial skill by which we have right notions, names, definitions, and formed arguments, and answers to objections. This artificial, logical, organical kind of knowledge is good and useful in its kind, if right ; like speech itself : but he that hath much of this, may have little of the former : and unlearned persons that have little of this, may have more of the former, and may have those inward perceptions of the verity of the promises and rewards of God, which they cannot bring forth into artificial reasonings to themselves or others ; who are taught of God, by the effective sort of teaching which reacheth the heart, or will, as well as the understanding, and

is a giving of what is taught, and a making us such as we are told we must be.* And who findeth not need to pray hard for this effective teaching of God, when he hath got all organical knowledge, and words and arguments in themselves most apt, at his fingers' ends, as we say? When I can prove the truth of the word of God, and the life to come, with the most convincing, undeniable reasons, I feel need to cry and pray daily to God, to increase my faith, and to give me that light which may staisfy the soul, and reach the end.

Sect. 14. 2. Yet man, being a rational wight, is not taught by mere instinct and inspiration, and therefore this effective teaching of God doth ordinarily suppose a rational, objective, organical teaching and knowledge. And the aforesaid unlearned Christians are convinced, by good evidence, that God's word is true, and his rewards are sure, though they have but a confused conception of this evidence, and cannot word it, nor reduce it to fit notions. And to drive these that have fundamental evidence, unseasonably and hastily to dispute their faith, and so to puzzle them by words and artificial objections, is but to hurt them, by setting the artificial, organical, lower part, which is the body of knowledge, against the real light and perception of the thing, (which is as the soul,) even as carnal men set the creatures against God, that should lead us to God, so do they by logical, artificial knowledge.

Sect. 15. But they that are prepared for such disputes, and furnished with all artificial helps, may make good use of them for defending and clearing up the truth to themselves and others, so be it they use them as a means to the due end, and in a right manner, and set them not up against, or instead of, the real and effective light.

Sect. 16. But the revealed and necessary part must here be distinguished from the unrevealed and unnecessary. To study till we, as clearly as may be, understand the certainty of a future happiness, and wherein it consisteth, (in the sight of God's glory, and in perfect, holy, mutual love, in union with Christ, and all the blessed,) this is of great use to our holiness and peace. But when we will know

* This is the true mean between George Keith the Quaker's doctrine of continued inspiration and intuition, and that on the other extreme.

more than God would have us, it doth but tend (as gazing on the sun) to make us blind, and to doubt of certainties, because we cannot be resolved of uncertainties. To trouble our heads too much in thinking how souls out of the body do subsist and act, sensitively or not, by organs or without; how far they are one, and how far still individuate, in what place they shall remain, and where is their paradise, or heaven; how shall they be again united to the body, whether by their own emission, as the sunbeams touch their objects here, and whether the body shall be restored, as the consumed flesh of restored, sick men, *aliunde*, or only from the old materials: A 'hundred of these questions are better left to the knowledge of Christ, lest we do but foolishly make snares for ourselves. Had all these been needful to us, they had been revealed. In respect to all such curiosities, and needless knowledge, it is a believer's wisdom implicitly to trust his soul to Christ, and to be satisfied that he knoweth what we know not, and to fear that vain, vexatious knowledge, or inquisitiveness into good and evil, which is selfish, and savoreth of a distrust of God, and is that sin, and fruit of sin, which the learned world too little feareth.

Sect. 17. *III.* That God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and that holy souls shall be in blessedness with Christ, these following evidences, conjoined, do evince, on which my soul doth raise its hopes.

Sect. 18. *i.* The soul, which is an immortal spirit, must be immortally in a good or bad condition; but man's soul is an immortal spirit, and the good are not in a bad condition. Its immortality is proved thus: A spiritual, or most pure, invisible substance, naturally endowed with the power, virtue, or faculty of vital action, intellection, and volition, which is not annihilated nor destroyed by separation of parts, nor ceaseth, or loseth, either its power, species, individuation, or action is an immortal spirit. But such is the soul of man, as shall be manifested by parts.

Sect. 19. *1.* The soul is a substance, for that which is nothing can do nothing; but it doth move, understand, and will. No man will deny that this is done by something in us, and by some substance, and that substance is it which we call the soul. It is not nothing, and it is within us.

Sect. 20. As to them that say, it is the temperament of several parts conjunct, I have elsewhere fully confuted them, and proved, 1. That it is some one part that is the agent on the rest, which all they confess that think it to be the material spirits, or fiery part. It is not bones and flesh that understand, but a purer substance, as all acknowledge. 2. What part soever it be, it can do no more than it is able to do, and a conjunction of many parts, of which no one hath the power of vitality, intellection, or volition, formally, or eminently, can never by contemperation do those acts, for there can be no more in the effect than is in the cause, otherwise it were no effect.

The vanity of their objections that tell us, a lute, a watch, a book, perform that by co-operation which no one part can do, I have elsewhere manifested. 1. Many strings, indeed, have many motions, and so have many effects on the ear and fantasy, which in us are sound, and harmony : but all is but a percussion of the air by strings, and were not that motion received by a sensitive soul, it would be no music or melody ; so that there is nothing done but what each part had power to do. But intellection and volition are not the conjunct motions of all parts of the body, receiving their form in a nobler intellective nature, as the sound of the strings maketh melody in man : if it were so, that receptive nature still would be as excellent as the effect importeth. 2. And the watch, or clock, doth but move according to the action of the spring, or poise ; but that it moveth in such an order as becometh to man a sign and measure of time, this is from man who ordereth it to that use. But there is nothing in the motion but what the parts have their power to cause ; and that it signifieth the hour of the days to us, is no action, but an object used by a rational soul as it can use the shadow of a tree, or house, that yet doth nothing. 3. And so a book doth nothing at all, but is a mere objective ordination of passive signs, by which man's active intellect can understand what the writer or orderer did intend ; so that here is nothing done beyond the power of the agent, nor any thing in the effect which was not in the cause, either formally or eminently. But for a company of atoms, of which no one hath sense or reason, to become sensitive and rational by mere conjunct motion, is an effect beyond the power of the supposed cause.

Sect. 21. But as some think so basely of our noblest acts as to think that contempered agitated atoms can perform them, that have no natural intellective, or sensitive, virtue or power in themselves, so others think so highly of them, as to take them to be the acts only of God, or some universal soul, in the body of man; and so that there is no life, sense, or reason in the world but God himself (or such an universal soul;) and so that either every man is God, as his to soul, or that it is the body only that is to be called man, as distinct from God. But this is the self-ensnaring and self-perplexing temerity of busy, bold, and arrogant heads, that know not their own capacity and measure. And on the like reasons, they must at last come, with others, to say, that all passive matter also is God, and that God is the universe, consisting of an active soul, and passive body. As if God were no cause, and could make nothing, or nothing with life, or sense, or reason.

Sect. 22. But why depart we from things certain, by such presumptions as these? Is it not certain, that there are baser creatures in the world than men or angels? Is it not certain that one man is not another? Is it not certain that some men are in torment of body and mind? And will it be a comfort to a man in such torment to tell him that he is God, or that he is part of an universal soul? Would not a man on the rack, or in the stone, or other misery, say, 'Call me by what name you please, that easeth not my pain. If I be a part of God, or an universal soul, I am sure I am a tormented, miserable part. And if you could make me believe that God hath some parts which are not serpents, toads, devils, or wicked or tormented men, you must give me other senses, and perceptive powers, before it will comfort me to hear that I am not such a part. And if God had wicked and tormented parts on earth, why may he not have such, and I be one of them hereafter! And If I be a holy and happy part of God, or of an universal soul on earth, why may not I hope to be such hereafter?

Sect. 23. We deny not but that God is the continued, first cause of all being whatsoever; and that the branches and fruit depend not, as effects, so much on the causality of the stock and roots, as the creature doth on God; and that it is an impious conceit to think that the

world, or any part of it, is a being independent, and separated totally from God, or subsisting without his continued causation. But cannot God cause, as a creator, by making that which is not himself? This yieldeth the self-deceiver no other honor nor happiness but what equally belongeth to a devil, to a fly, or worm, to a dunghill, or to the worst and miserable man !

Sect. 24. 2. As man's soul is a substance, so is it a substance differenced formally from all inferior substances, by an innate (indeed essential) power, virtue, or faculty, of vital action, intellection, and free-will : for we find all these acts performed by it, as motion, light, and heat are by the fire or sun. And if any should think that these actions are like those of a musician, compounded of the agents (principal and organical several) parts, could he prove it, no more would follow, but that the lower powers (the sensitive, or spirits) are to the higher as a passive organ, receiving its operations ; and that the intellectual soul hath the power of causing intellection and volition by its action on the inferior parts, as a man can cause such motions of his lute, as shall be melody (not to it, but) to himself : and consequently, that as music is but a lower operation of man, (whose proper acts of intellection and volition are above it,) so intellection and volition in the body are not the noblest acts of the soul, but it performed them by an eminent power, which can do greater things. And if this could be proved, what would it tend to the unbeliever's ends, or to the disadvantage of our hopes and comforts ?

Sect. 25. 3. That man's soul, at death, is not annihilated, even the atomists and epicureans will grant, who think that no atom in the universe is annihilated : and we that see, not only the sun and heavens continued, but every grain of matter, and that compounds are changed by dissolution of parts, and rarefaction, or migration, &c., and not by annihilation, have no reason to dream that God will annihilate one soul (though he can do it if he please, yea, and annihilate all the world): it is a thing beyond a rational expectation.

Sect. 26. 4. And a destruction, by the dissolution of the parts of the soul, we need not fear. For, (1.) Either an intellectual spirit is divisible and partible, or not ; if not, we need not fear it ; if it be, either it is a thing that nature tendeth to, or not ; but that nature

doth not tend to it, is evident. For, there is naturally so strange and strong an inclination to unity, and averseness to separation in all things, that even earth and stones, that have no other (known) natural motion, have yet an aggregate motion in their gravitation: but if you will separate the parts from the rest, it must be by force. And water is yet more averse from partition without force, and more inclined to union than earth, and air than water, and fire than air; so he that will cut a sunbeam into pieces, and make many of one, must be an extraordinary agent. And surely spirits, even intellectual spirits, will be no less averse from partition, and inclined to keep their unity, than fire, or a sunbeam is; so that naturally it is not a thing to be feared, that it should fall into pieces.

(2.) And he that will say, that the God of nature will change, and overcome the nature that he hath made, must give us good proofs of it, or it is not to be feared. And if he should do it as a punishment, we must find such a punishment somewhere threatened, either in his natural or supernatural law, which we do not, and therefore need not fear it.

Sect. 27. (3.) But if it were to be feared, that souls were partible, and would be broken into parts, this would be no destruction of them either as to their substance, powers, form, or action, but only a breaking of one soul into many: for being not compounded of heterogeneous parts, but, as simple elements, of homogeneous only, as every atom of earth is earth, and every drop of water in the sea is water, and every particle of air and fire is air and fire, and have all the properties of earth, water, air, and fire; so would it be with every particle of an intellectual spirit. But who can see cause to dream of such a partition, never threatened by God?

Sect. 28. 5. And that souls lose not their formal powers, or virtues, we have great reason to conceive; because they are their natural essence, not as mixed, but simple substances: and though some imagine that the passive elements may, by attenuation or incrassation, be transmuted one into another, yet we see that earth is still earth, and water is water, and air is air; and their conceit hath no proof: and, were it proved, it would but prove that none of these are a first or proper element: but what should an intellectual spirit be changed

into? how should it loose its formal power? Not by nature; for its nature hath nothing that tendeth to deterioration, or decay, or self-destruction. The sun doth not decay by its wonderful motion, light, and heat: and why should spirits? Not by God's destroying them, or changing their nature: for, though all things are in constant motion or revolution, he continueth the natures of the simple beings, and sheweth us, that he delighteth in a constancy of operations, insomuch that, hence, Aristotle thought the world eternal. And God hath made no law that threateneth to do it as a penalty. Therefore, to dream that intellectual spirits shall be turned into other things, and lose their essential, formal powers, which specify them, is without and against all sober reason. Let them first but prove that the sun loseth motion, light, and heat, and is turned into air, or water, or earth. Such changes are beyond a rational fear.

Sect. 29. 6. But some men dream that souls shall sleep, and cease their acts, though they lose not their powers. But this is more unreasonable than the former. For it must be remembered that it is not a mere obediential, passive power that we speak of; but an active power consisting in as great an inclination to act, as passive natures have to forbear action. So that if such a nature act not, it must be because its natural inclination is hindered by a stronger: and who shall hinder it?

(1.) God would not continue an active power, force, and inclination in nature, and forcibly hinder the operation of that nature which he himself continueth; unless penally for some special cause; which he never gave us any notice of by any threatening, but the contrary.

(2.) Objects will not be wanting, for all the world will be still at hand, and God above all. It is, therefore, an unreasonable conceit to think that God will continue an active, vital, intellective, volitive nature, form, power, force, inclination, in a noble substance, which shall use none of these for many hundred or thousand years, and so continue them in vain.

Nay, (3.) It is rather to be thought that some action is their constant state, without which the cessation of their very form would be inferred.

Sec. 30. But all that can be said with reason is, that separated souls, and souls hereafter in spiritual bodies, will have actions of another mode, and very different from these that we now perceive in flesh: and be it so. They will yet be, radically, of the same kind, and they will be formally or eminently such as we now call, vitality, intellection, and volition; and they will be no lower or less excellent, if not far more; and then what the difference will be, Christ knoweth, whom I trust, and in season I shall know. But to talk of a dead life, and an unactive activity, or a sleeping soul, is fitter for a sleeping than a waking man.

Sec. 31. It is true that diseases or hurts do now hinder the soul's intellectual perceptions in the body, and in infancy and sleep they are imperfect. Which proveth, indeed, that the acts, commonly called intellection and volition, have now something in them also of sensation, and that sensitive operations are diversified by the organs of the several senses. And that bare intellection and volition, without any sensation is now scarce to be observed in us, though the soul may have such acts intrinsically, and in its profundity. For it is now so united to this body, that it acteth on it as our form; and, indeed, the acts observed by us cannot be denied to be such as are specified, or modified, at least, by the agents, and the recipients, and sub-agents' parts conjunct. But, 1. As the sun would do the same thing *ex parte sui*, if *in vacuo* only it sent forth its beams, though this were no illumination, or calefaction, because there were no recipient to be illuminated and heated by it. And it would lose nothing by the want of objects; so the soul, had it no body to act on, would have its profound immanent acts of self-living, self-perceiving, and self-loving; and all its external acts on other objects, which need not organs of sense for their approximation. And, 2. Its sensitive faculty is itself, or such as it is not separated from, though the particular sorts of sensation may be altered with their uses: and therefore it may still act on or with the sense: and if one way of sensation be hindered, it hath another. 3. And how far this lantern of flesh doth help, or hinder, its operations, we know not yet, but shall know hereafter. *Sondius de Orig. Animæ*, (though an heretical writer), hath said much to prove that the body is a hindrance, and not a help, to the

soul's intuition. And if ratiocination be a compound act, yet intuition may be done for ever by the soul alone. 4. But as we are not to judge what powers the soul hath when the acts are hindered, but when they are done ; nor what souls were made by God for, by their state in the womb, or infancy, or diseases, but by our ordinary, mature state of life ; so we have little reason to think that the same God who made them for life, intellection, and volitions here, will not continue the same powers to the same, or as noble uses hereafter, whether with organs, or without, as pleaseth him. If in this flesh our spirits were not inactive and useless, we have no reason to think that they will be so hereafter, and that for ever.

Sect. 32. This greatest and hardest of all objections, doth make us confess (with *Contarenius, contra Pomponatium de Anim. Immortalit.*.) that though by the light of nature, we may know the immortality of souls, (and that they lose not their powers or activity,) yet, without supernatural light, we know not what manner of action they will have in their separated state, or in another world, because here they act according to objective termination, and the receptivity of the sense and fantasy, and *recipitur ad modum recipientis* ; and in the womb we perceive not that it acteth intellectually at all.

But we know, That, 1. If even then it differed not in its formal power from the souls of brutes, it would not so much afterward differ in act : and it would never be raised to that which was not virtually in its nature at the first. 2. And we find that even very little children have quick and strong knowledge of such objects as are brought within their reach ; and that their ignorance is not for want of an intellectual power, but for want of objects, or images of things, which time, and use, and conversation among objects, must furnish their fantasies and memories with. And so a soul in the womb, or in an apoplexy, hath not objects of intellection within its reach to act upon ; but is as the sun to a room that hath no windows to let in its light. 3. And what if its profound vitality, self-perception, and self-love, be by a kind of sensation and intuition, rather than by discursive reason : I doubt not but some late philosophers make snares to themselves and others, by too much vilifying sense and sensitive souls, as if sense were but some loseable accident of contempered atoms : but sensation

(though diversified by organs and uses, and so far mutable) is the act of a noble, spiritual form and virtue. And as Chambre, and some others, make brutes a lower rank of rationals, and man another higher species, as having his nobler reason for higher ends ; so for man to be the noblest order (here) of sensitives, and to have an intellect to order, and govern sensations, and connect them and improve them, were a noble work, if we had no higher. And if intellection and volition were but a higher species of internal sensation than imagination, and the fantasy and memory are, it might yet be a height that should set man specifically above the brutes. And I am daily more and more persuaded, that intellectual souls are essentially sensitive and more, and that their sensation never ceaseth. 4. And still I say, that it is to nature itself a thing unlikely, that the God of nature will long continue a soul that hath formally or naturally an intellective power, in a state in which it shall have no use of it. Let others that will inquire whether it shall have a vehicle or none to act in, and whether aërial, or igneous, and ethereal, and whether it be really an intellectual sort of fire, as material as the solar fire, whose (not compounding, but) *inadequaté-conceptus objectivi* are, an igneous substance, and formal virtue of life, sense, and intellection, with other such puzzling doubts ; it satisfieth me, that God will not continue its nobler powers in vain ; and how they shall be exercised, is known to him ; and that God's word tells us more than nature. And withal, life, intuition, and love (or volition) are acts so natural to the soul, (as motion light and heat, *quoad actum* to fire) that I cannot conceive how its separation should hinder them, but rather that its incorporation hindereth the two latter, by hiding objects, whatever be said of abstractive knowledge and memory.

Sect. 33. 7. But the greatest difficulty to natural knowledge is, whether souls will continue their individuation, or rather fall into one common soul, or return so to God that gave them, as to be no more divers (or many) individuals as now ; as extinguished candles are united to the illuminated air, or to the sunbeams ; but of this I have elsewhere said much for others ; and for myself, I find I need but this : 1. That, as I said before, either souls are partible substances or not ; if not partible, how are they unible ? If many may be made

one, by conjunction of substances, then that one may (by God) be made many again by partition. Either all (or many) souls are now but one, (individuate only by matter, as many gulfs in the sea, or many candles lighted by the sun) or not; if they are not one now in several bodies, what reason have we to think that they will be one hereafter, any more than now? Augustine (*de Anim.*) was put on the question, 1. Whether souls are one, and not many. And that he utterly denieth. 2. Whether they are many, and not one. And that it seemeth he could not digest. 3. Whether they were at once both one and many. Which he thought would seem to some ridiculous, but he seemeth most to incline to. And as God is the God of nature, so nature (even of the devils themselves) dependeth on him, as I said, more than the leaves or fruit do on the tree; and we are all his offspring, and live, and move, and are in him. (Act. xvii.) But we are certain for all this, 1. That we are not God. 2. That we are yet many individuals, and not all one soul, or man. If our union should be as near as the leaves and fruit on the same tree, yet those leaves and fruit are numerous, and individual leaves and fruits, through parts of the tree. And were this proved of our present or future state, it would not alter our hopes or fears; for as now, though we all live, move, and be in God, (and, as some dream, are parts of a common soul,) yet it is certain, that some are better and happier than others; some wise and good; and some foolish and evil; some in pain and misery; and some at ease, and in pleasure; and (as I said) it is now no ease to the miserable, to be told that, radically, all souls are one; no more will it be hereafter, nor can men reasonably hope for, or fear such an union, as shall make their state the same. We see in nature, (as I have elsewhere said,) that if you graft many sorts of scions, (some sweet, some bitter, some crabs,) on the same stock, they will be one tree, and yet have diversity of fruit. If souls be not unible, nor partible substances, there is no place for this doubt: if they be, they will be still what they are, notwithstanding any such union with a common soul. As a drop of water in the sea is a separable part, and still itself; and as a crab upon the foresaid stock, or tree. And the good or bad quality ceaseth not by any union with others.

Sure we are, that all creatures are in God, by close dependence, and yet that the good are good, and the bad are bad ; and that God is good, and hath no evil ; and that when man is tormented, or miserable, God suffereth nothing by it, (as the whole man doth, when but a tooth doth ache,) for he would not hurt himself were he passive. Therefore, to dream of any such cessation of our individuation by any union with a creature, as shall make the good less good or happy, or the bad less bad or miserable, is a groundless folly.

Sect. 34. Yet it is very probable, that there will be a nearer union of holy souls with God and Christ, and one another, than we can here conceive of : but this is so far from being to be feared, that it is the highest of our hopes. (1.) God himself (though equally every where in his essence) doth operate very variously on his creatures. On the wicked he operateth as the first cause of nature, as his sun shineth on them. On some he operateth by common grace : to some he giveth faith to prepare them for the in-dwelling of his spirit. In believers he dwelleth by love, and they in him ; and if we may use such a comparison, as Satan acteth on some only by suggestions, but on others so despotically, as that it is called his possessing them ; so God's Spirit worketh on holy souls, so powerfully and constantly, as is called his possessing them. And yet, on the human nature of Christ, the divine nature of the second person hath such a further, extraordinary operation, as is justly called a personal union ; which is not by a more essential presence, (for that is everywhere,) but by a peculiar operation and relation : and so holy souls being under a more felicitating operation of God, may well be said to have a nearer union with them than now they have.

Sect. 35. (2.) And I observe that (as is aforesaid) all things have naturally a strong inclination to union and communion with their like : every clod and stone inclineth to the earth : water would go to water, air to air, fire to fire ; birds and beasts associate with their like : and the noblest natures are most strongly thus inclined : and therefore I have natural reason to think that it will be so with holy souls.

Sect. 36. (3.) And I find, that the inordinate contraction of man to himself, and to the interest of this individual person, with the defect of love to all about us, according to every creature's goodness, and

especially to God, the infinite good, whom we should love above ourselves, is the very sum of all the pravity of man. And all the injustice and injury to others ; and all the neglect of good works in the world and all our daily terrors, and self-distracting, self-tormenting cares, and griefs, and fears, proceed from this inordinate love and adhesion to ourselves ; therefore I have reason to think, that in our better state, we shall perfectly love others as ourselves, and the selfish love will turn into a common and a divine love, which must be by our preferring the common, and the divine good and interest.

Sect. 37. And I am so sensible of the power and plague of selfishness, and how it now corrupteth, tempteth, and disquieteth me, that when I feel any fears, lest individuation cease, and my soul fall into one common soul, (as the stoics thought all souls did at death,) I find great cause to suspect, that this ariseth from the power of this corrupting selfishness ; for reason seeth no cause at all to fear it, were it so.

Sect. 38. (4.) For I find also, that the nature of love is to desire as near a union as possible ; and the strongest love doth strongest desire it. Fervent lovers think they can scarce be too much one : and love is our perfection, and therefore so is union.

Sect. 39. (5.) And I find, that when Christians had the first and full pourings out of the Spirit, they had the ferventest love, and the nearest union, and the least desire of propriety and distance.

Sect. 40. (6.) And I find, that Christ's prayer for the felicity of his disciples, is a prayer for their unity. (John xvii. 22, 23.) And in this he placeth much of their perfection.

Sect. 41. (7.) And I find also, that man is of a social nature, and that all men find by experience, that conjunction in societies is needful for their safety, strength, and pleasure.

Sect. 42. (8.) And I find, that my soul would fain be nearer God, and that darkness and distance is my misery, and near communion is it that would answer all the tendencies of my soul ; why then, should I fear too near a union.

Sect. 43. I think it utterly improbable, that my soul should become more nearly united to any creature than to God ; (though it be of the same kind with other souls, and infinitely below God ;) for

God is as near me, as I am to myself; I still depend on him, as the effect upon its total, constant cause; and that not as the fruit upon the tree, which borroweth all from the earth, water, air, and fire, which it communicateth to its fruit; but as a creature on its Creator, who hath no being but what it receiveth totally from God, by constant communication. Hence Antonine, Seneca, and the rest of the stoics, thought that all the world was God, or one great animal, consisting of divine spirit and matter, as man of soul and body; sometimes calling the supposed soul of the world, God; and sometimes calling the whole world, God; but still meaning that the universe was but one spirit and body united, and that we all are parts of God, or of the body of God, or accidents, at least.

Sect. 44. And even the popish mystical divines, in their pretensions to the highest perfection, say the same in sense; such as Benedict. Anglus in his *Regula Perfectionis*, (approved by many doctors,) who placed much of his supereminent life in our believing verily that there is nothing but God, as the beams are to the sun, and as the heat is to the fire; (which really is itself;) and so teaching us to rest in all things as good, as being nothing but God's essential will, which is himself (resolving even our sins and imperfections accordingly into God, so that they are God's, or none).

Sect. 45. And all these men have as fair a pretense for the conceits of such an union with God now, as for such a union after death: for their reason is, 1. That God being infinite, there can be no more beings than his own; but God and the smallest being distinct, would be more entity than God alone; but infinity can have no addition. 2. Because *ens et bonum convertuntur*; but God only is good.

And if we are, notwithstanding all this, distinct beings from God now, we shall not be so advanced as to be deified, and of creatures, or distinct beings, turned into a being infinitely above us. If we be not parts of God now, we shall not be so then.

But if they could prove that we are so now, we should quickly prove to them, 1. That then God hath material, divisible parts (as the stoics thought). 2. And that we are no such parts, as are not distinct from one another; but some are tormented, and some happy. And, 3. That (as is said) it will be no abatement of the misery of

the tormented, nor the felicity of the blessed, to tell them that they are all parts of God : for, though the manner of our union with him, and dependence on him, be past our comprehension ; yet that we are distinct and distant from each other, and have each one a joy or misery of his own, is past all doubt. Therefore, there is no union with God to be feared by holy souls, but the utmost possible to be highest desired.

Sect. 46. And if our union with God shall not cease our individuation, or resolve us into a principle to be feared, we may say also of our union with any common soul, or many : if we be unible, we are partible, and so have a distinct, though not a divided substance, which will have its proper accidents. All plants are parts of the earth, really united to it, and radicated, in it, and live, and are nourished by it ; and yet a vine is a vine ; and an apple is an apple ; and a rose is a rose ; and a nettle is a nettle. And few men would be toiled horses, or toads, if it were proved that they are animated by a common soul.

Sect. 47. But God letteth us see, that though the world be one, yet he delighteth in a wonderful diversity, and multiplicity of individuals. How various and numerous are they in the sea and on the land, and in the air. And are there none in the other world ? How come the stars therein to be so numerous, which are of the same element ? and though, perhaps, Saturn, or some other planets, or many stars, may send forth their radiant effluvia, or parts, into the same air, which the sunbeams seem totally to fill and illuminate, yet the rays of the sun, and of other stars, are not the same, how near soever in the same air.

Sect. 48. Were there now no more contraction by egoity, or propriety among men, nor mine and thine did signify no more, nor the distance were greater than that of the several drops of water in the sea, or particles of light in the illuminated air, but I had all my part in such a perfect unity and communion with all others, and knew that all were as happy as I, so that there were no divisions by cross interests or minds, but all were one, certainly it would make my own comforts greater by far, than they are now ? Are not an hundred

candles set together and united, as splendid a flame as if they were all set asunder? So one soul, one love, one joy would be.*

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Sect. 51. *Obj.* But this would equalize the good and bad, or at least, those that were good in several degrees; and where then were the reward and punishment?

Answ. It would not equal them at all, any more than distinct personality would do: for, 1. The souls of all holy persons may be so united, as that the souls of the wicked shall have no part in that union. Whether the souls of the wicked shall be united in one sinful, miserable soul, or rather but in one sinful society, or be greatlier separate, disunited, contrary to each other, and militant, as part of their sin and misery, is nothing to this case. 2. Yet natural and moral union must be differenced. God is the root of nature to the worst, and however in one sense it is said, that there is nothing in God but God, yet it is true, that in him all live, and move, and have their being; but yet the wicked's in-being in God doth afford them no sanctifying or beatifying communion with him, as experience sheweth us in this life; which yet holy souls have, as being made capable recipients of it. As I said, different plants, briars, and cedars, the stinking and the sweet, are implanted parts (or accidents) of the same world or earth. 3. And the godly themselves may have as different a share of happiness in one common soul, as they have now of holiness, and so as different rewards (even as roses and rosemary, and other herbs, differ in the same garden, and several fruits in the same orchard, or on the same tree). For if souls are unible, and so partible substances, they have neither more nor less of substance or holiness for their union; and so will each have his proper measure. As a tun of water cast into the sea will there still be the same, and more than a spoonful cast into it.

Sect. 52. *Obj.* But spirits are not as bodies extensive and quantitative, and so not partible or divisable, and therefore your supposition is vain.

* Sections 49 and 50 are omitted;—they contain an abstruse answer to an abstruse objection, both being founded, like much of the reasoning in the context, on a philosophy now obsolete.—*Ed.*

Answ. 1. My supposition is but the objectors': for if they confess that spirits are substances, (as cannot with reason be denied; for they that specify their operations by motion only, yet suppose a pure proper substance to be the substance or thing moved,) then when they talk of many souls becoming one, it must be by conjunction, and increase of the substance of that one: or when they say, that they were always one, they will confess withal that they now differ in number, as individuate in the body. And who will say, that millions of millions are no more than one of all those millions? Number is a sort of quantity; and all souls in the world are more than Cain's or Abel's only; one feeleth not what another feeleth; one knoweth not what another knoweth. And indeed, though souls have not such corporeal extension, as passive, gross, bodily matter hath, yet, as they are more noble, they have a more noble sort of extension, quantity, or degrees, according to which all mankind conceive of all the spiritual substance of the universe; yea, all the angels, or all the souls on earth, as being more, and having more substance than one man's soul alone. 2. And the fathers, for the most part, especially the Greeks, (yea, and the second council of Nice,) thought that spirits created, had a purer sort of material being, which Tertullian called a body; and doubtless, all created spirits have somewhat of passiveness; for they do *recipere vel pati* from the divine influx; only God is wholly impassive. We are moved when we move, and acted when we act; and it is hard to conceive, that (when matter is commonly called passive) that which is passive should have no sort of matter in a large sense taken; and if it had any parts distinguishable, they are by God divisible. 3. But if the contrary be supposed, that all souls are no more than one, and so that there is no place for uniting or partition, there is no place then for the objection of all souls becoming one, and of losing individuation, unless they mean by annihilation.

Sect. 53. But that God who (as is said) delighteth both in the union, and yet in the wonderful multiplicity of creatures, and will not make all stars to be only one; though fire have a most uniting or aggregative inclination, hath further given experimental notice that there is individuation in the other world as well as here, even innumerable angels and devils, and not one only: as apparitions and

witches, and many other evidences prove, of which more anon. So that, all things considered, there is no reason to fear that the souls shall lose their individuation or activity, (though they change their manner of action,) any more than their being or formal power : and so it is naturally certain that they are immortal.

Sect. 54. And if holy souls are so far immortal, I need not prove that they will be immortally happy ; for their holiness will infer it ; and few will ever dream that it shall there go ill with them that are good, and that the most just and holy God will not use those well whom he maketh holy.

Sect. 1. ii. That holy souls shall be hereafter happy, seemeth to be one of the common notices of nature planted in the consciences of mankind ; and it is therefore acknowledged by the generality of the world that freely use their understandings. Most, yea almost all the heathen nations at this day believe it, besides the Mahometans ; and it is the most barbarous cannibals and Brazilians that do not, whose understandings have had the least improvement, and who have rather an inconsiderate nescience of it, than a denying opposition. And though some philosophers denied it, they were a small and condemned party : and though many of the rest were somewhat dubious, it was only a certainty which they professed to want, and not a probability or opinion that it was true ; and both the vulgar and the deep-studied men believed it, and those that questioned it were the half-studied philosophers, who, not resting in the natural notice, nor yet reaching full intellectual evidence of it by discourse, had found out matter of difficulty to puzzle them, and came not to that degree of wisdom as would have resolved them.

Sect. 2. And even among apostates from Christianity, most, or many still acknowledge the soul's immortality, and the felicity and reward of holy souls, to be of the common notices, known by nature to mankind. Julian was so much persuaded of it, that, on that account he exhorteth his priests and subjects to great strictness and holiness of life, and to see that the Christian did not exceed them : and, among us, the Lord Herbert *de Veritate*, and many others that seem not to believe our supernatural revelations of Christianity, do fully acknowledge it. Besides, those philosophers who most opposed Christianity, as Porphyrius, Maximus Tyrius, and such others.

Sect. 3. And we find that this notice hath so deep a root in nature, that few of those that study and labor themselves into bestiality (or sadducism) are able to excuse the fears of future misery, but conscience overcometh, or troubleth them much at least, when they have done the worst they can against it. And whence should all this be in man and not in beast, if man had no further reason of hopes and fears than they? Are a few Sadducees wiser by their forced or crude conceits, than all the world that are taught by nature itself.

Sect. 1. III. If the God of nature have made it every man's certain duty to make it his chief care and work in this life, to seek for happiness hereafter, then such a happiness there is for them that truly seek it. But the antecedent is certain, as I have elsewhere proved. *Ergo, &c.*

Sect. 2. As to the antecedent. The world is made up of three sorts of men, as to the belief of future retribution, 1. Such as take it for a certain truth; such are Christians, Mahometans, and most heathens. 2. Such as take it for uncertain, but most probable or likeliest to be true. 3. Such as take it for uncertain, but rather think it untrue. For as none can be certain that it is false, which indeed is true, so I never yet met with one that would say he was certain that it was false: so that I need not trouble you with the mention of any other party or opinion; but if any should say so, it is easy to prove that he speaketh falsely of himself.

Sect. 3. And that it is the duty of all these, but especially of the two former sorts, to make it their chief care and work to seek their happiness in the life to come, is easily proved thus: natural reason requireth every man to seek that which is best for himself, with the greatest diligence; but natural reason saith that probability or possibility of the future everlasting happiness is better and more worthy to be sought, than any thing attainable in this present life (which doth not suppose it.) *Ergo, &c.*

Sect. 4. The major is past doubt. Good and felicity being necessarily desired by the will of man, that which is best, and known so to be, must be most desired.

And the minor should be as far past doubt to men that use not their sense against their reason. For, 1. In this life there is nothing cer-

tain to be continued one hour. 2. It is certain that all will quickly end, and that the longest life is short. 3. It is certain that time and pleasure past are nothing, properly nothing; and so no better to us than if they had never been. 4. And it is certain that, while we possess them, they are poor, unsatisfactory things, the pleasure of the flesh being no sweeter to a man than to a beast, and the trouble that accompanieth it much more. Beasts have not the cares, fears, and sorrows, upon foresight, which man hath. They fear not death upon the foreknowledge of it, nor fear any misery after death, nor are put upon any labor, sufferings, or trials, to obtain a future happiness, or avoid a future misery. All which considered, he speaketh not by reason, who saith this vain, vexatious life is better than the possibility or probability of the everlasting glory.

Sect. 5. Now as to the consequence, or major of the first argument, it is evident of itself, from God's perfection, and the nature of his works. God maketh it not man's natural duty to lay out his chief care and labor of all his life, on that which is not, or to seek that which man was never made to attain : for then, 1. All his duty should result from mere deceit and falsehood, and God should govern all the world by a lie, which cannot be his part who wanteth neither power, wisdom, nor love, to rule them by truth and righteousness, and who hath printed his image both on his laws and on his servants; in which laws lying is condemned, and the better any man is, the more he hateth it; and liars are loathed by all mankind. 2. And then the better any man is, and the more he doth his duty, the more deluded, erroneous, and miserable should he be. For he should spend that care and labor of his life upon deceit, for that which he shall never have, and so should lose his time and labor : and he should deny his flesh those temporal pleasures which bad men take, and suffer persecutions and injuries from the wicked, and all for nothing, and on mistake : and the more wicked, or more unbelieving, any man is, the wiser and happier should he be, as being in the right, when he denieth the life to come, and all duty and labor in seeking it, or in avoiding future punishment; and while he taketh his utmost pleasure here, he hath all that man was made for. But all this is utterly unsuitable to God's perfection, and to his other works : for he maketh nothing

in vain, nor can he lie, much less will he make holiness itself, and all that duty and work of life which reason itself obligeth all men, to be not only in vain but hurtful to them. But of this argument I have been elsewhere larger.

Sect. 1. IV. Man differeth so much from brutes in the knowledge of God, and of his future possibilities, that it proveth that he differeth as much in his capacity and certain hopes. I. As to the antecedent, man knoweth that there is a God by his works. He knoweth that this God is our absolute Lord, our ruler and our end. He knoweth that, naturally, we owe him all our love and obedience. He knoweth that good men use not to let their most faithful servants be losers by their fidelity; nor do they use to set them to labor in vain. He knoweth that man's soul is immortal, or, at least, that it is far more probable that it is so; and therefore that it must accordingly be well or ill forever, and that this should be most cared for. 2. And why should God give him all this knowledge more than to the brutes, if he were made for no more enjoyment than the brutes, of what he knoweth. Every wise man maketh his work fit for the use that he intendeth it to: and will not God? So that the consequence also is proved from the divine perfection; and if God were not perfect, he were not God. The denial of a God, therefore, is the result of the denial of man's future hopes.

Sect. 2. And, indeed, though it be but an analogical reason that brutes have, those men seem to be in the right who place the difference between man and brutes more in the objects, tendency, and work of our reason, than in our reason itself as such, and so make *animal religiosum* to be more of his description than *animal rationale*. About their own low concerns, a fox, a dog, yea, an ass, and a goose, have such actions as we know not well how to ascribe to any thing below some kind of reasoning, or a perception of the same importance. But they think not of God, and his government, and laws, nor of obeying, trusting, or loving him, nor of the hopes or fears of another life, nor of the joyful prospect of it. These are that work that man was made for, which is the chief difference from the brutes: and shall we unman ourselves?

Sec. 1. V. The justice of God, as governor of the world, inferreth different rewards hereafter, as I have largely elsewhere proved.

1. God is not only a mover of all that moveth, but a moral ruler of man by laws, and judgment, and executions, else there were no proper law of nature, which few are so unnatural as to deny; and man should have no proper duty, but only motion as he is moved. And then, how cometh a government by laws to be set up under God by men? And then there were no sin or fault in any; for if there were no law and duty, but only necessitated motion, all would be moved as the mover pleased, and there could be no sin; and then there would be no moral good, but forced or necessary motion. But all this is most absurd; and experience telleth us that God doth *de facto*, morally govern the world; and his right is unquestionable.

Sect. 2. And if God were not the ruler of the world, by law and judgment, the world would have no universal laws, for there is no man that is the universal ruler: and then kings and other supreme powers would be utterly lawless and ungoverned, as having none above them to give them laws, and so they would be capable of no sin or fault, and of no punishment; which yet neither their subjects' interest, nor their own consciences will grant, or allow them thoroughly to believe.

Sect. 3. And if God be a ruler, he is just; or else he were not perfect, nor so good, as he requireth princes and judges on earth to be. An unjust ruler or judge is abominable to all mankind. Righteousness is the great attribute of the universal King.

Sect. 4. But how were he a righteous ruler, 1. If he drew all men to obey him by deceit? 2. If he obliged them to seek and expect a felicity or reward which he will never give them? 3. If he make man's duty his misery? 4. If he require him to labor in vain? 5. If he suffer the wicked to prosecute his servants to the death, and make duty costly, and give no after recompense? 3. If he let the most wicked on the earth pass unpunished, or to escape as well hereafter as the best, and to live in greater pleasure here? The objections fetched from the intrinsical good of duty I have elsewhere answered.

Sect. 1. VI. But God hath not left us to the light of mere nature, as being too dark for men as blind as we. The gospel revelation is

the clear foundation of our faith and hopes. Christ hath brought life and immortality to light. One from heaven that is greater than an angel was sent to tell us what is there, and which is the way to secure our hopes. He hath risen, and conquered death, and entered before as our captain and forerunner into the everlasting habitations. And he hath all power in heaven and earth, and all judgment is committed to him, that he might give eternal life to his elect. He hath frequently and expressly promised it them, that they shall live because he liveth, and shall not perish but have everlasting life. (Matt. xxviii. 18; John v. 22, xvii. 2, xii. 26, iii. 16; Rom. viii. 35—38.) And how fully he hath proved and sealed the truth of his word and office to us, I have so largely opened in my 'Reasons of the Christian Religion,' and 'Unreasonableness of Infidelity,' and in my 'Life of Faith,' &c.; and since, in my 'Household Catechising,' that I will not here repeat it.

Sect. 2. And as all his word is full of promises of our future glory at the resurrection, so we are not without assurance that at death the departing soul doth enter upon a state of joy and blessedness. "They that died to (or in) the flesh according to men, do live in the Spirit according to God." (1 Pet. iv. 6.) For,

1. He expressly promised the penitent, crucified thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke xxiii. 43.)

2. He gave us the narrative or parable of the damned sensualist, and of Lazarus, (Luke xvi.,) to instruct us, and not to deceive us.

3. He tells the Sadducees that God is not the God of the dead (as his subjects and beneficiaries) but of the living. (Matt. xxii. 32.)

4. Enoch and Elias were taken up to heaven, and Moses that died, appeared with Elias on the mount. (Matt. xvii.)

5. He telleth us, (Luke xii. 4,) that they that kill the body, are not able to kill the soul. Indeed, if the soul were not immortal, the resurrection were impossible. It might be a new creation of another soul, but not a resurrection of the same, if the same be annihilated. It is certain that the Jews believed the immortality of the soul, in that they believed the resurrection and future life of the same man.

6. And Christ's own soul was commended into his Father's hands, (Luke xxiii. 46,) and was in paradise, when his body was in the grave, to show us what shall become of ours.

7. And he hath promised, that where he is, there shall his servants be also. (John xii. 26.) And that the life here begun in us is eternal life, and that he that believeth in him shall not die, but shall live by him, as he liveth by the Father, for he dwelleth in God, and God in him, and in Christ, and Christ in him. (John xvii. 3, and vi. 54, and iii. 16, 36, and vi. 47, 50, 56, 57; 1 John iv. 12, 13; Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17.)

8. And accordingly, Stephen that saw heaven opened, prayed the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit. (Acts vii. 55, 59.)

9. And we are come to Mount Sion, &c., to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the just made perfect. (Heb. xii. 22, 23.)

10. And Paul here desireth to depart and be with Christ as far better. And to be absent from the body, and be present with the Lord. (2 Cor. v. 8.)

11. And the dead that die in the Lord are blessed, from henceforth, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

12. And if the disobedient spirits be in prison, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, (1 Pet. iii. 19; Jude 7,) then the just have eternal life. And if the Jews had not thought the soul immortal, Saul had not desired the witch to call up Samuel to speak with him. The rest I now pass by. We have many great and precious promises on which a departed soul may trust.

13. And (Luke xvi. 9,) Christ expressly saith, that when we fail, (that is, must leave this world,) we shall be received into the everlasting habitations.

Sect. 1. VII. And it is not nothing to encourage us to hope in him that hath made all these promises, when we find how he heareth prayers in this life, and thereby assureth his servants that he is their true and faithful Saviour. We are apt in our distress to cry loud for mercy and deliverances, and when human help faileth, to promise God, that if he now will save us, we will thankfully acknowledge it his work, and yet when we are delivered, to return not only to security, but to ingratitude, and think that our deliverance came but in

the course of common providence, and not indeed as an answer to our prayers. And therefore God in mercy reneweth both our distresses and our deliverances, that what once or twice will not convince us of, many and great deliverances may. This is my own case. Oh, how oft have I cried to him when men and means were nothing, and when no help in second causes did appear, and how oft, and suddenly, and mercifully hath he delivered me! What sudden ease, what removal of long afflictions have I had! such extraordinary changes, and beyond my own and others' expectations, when many plain-hearted, upright Christians have, by fasting and prayer, sought God on my behalf, as have over and over convinced me of special providence, and that God is indeed a hearer of prayers. And wonders I have seen done for others also, upon such prayers, more than for myself, yea, and wonders for the church and public societies. Though I and others are too like those Israelites, (Psalm lxxviii.,) who cried to God in their troubles, and he oft delivered them out of their distresss, but they quickly forgot his mercies, and their convictions, purposes, and promises, when they should have praised the Lord for his goodness, and declared his works with thanksgiving to the sons of men.

And what were all these answers and mercies but the fruits of Christ's power, fidelity, and love, the fulfillings of his promises, and the earnest of the greater blessings of immortality, which the same promises give me title to.

I know that no promise of hearing prayer setteth up our wills in absoluteness, or above God's, as if every will of ours must be fulfilled if we do but put it into a fervent or confident prayer; but if we ask any thing through Christ, according to his will, expressed in his promise, he will hear us. If a sinful love of this present life, or of ease, or wealth, or honor, should cause me to pray to God against death, or against all sickness, want, reproach, or other trials, as if I must live here in prosperity for ever if I ask it, this sinful desire and expectation is not the work of faith, but of presumption. What if God will not abate me my last, or daily pains? What if he will continue my life no longer, whoever pray for it, and how earnestly soever? Shall I therefore forget how oft he hath heard prayers for

me? and how wonderfully he hath helped both me and others? My faith hath oft been helped by such experiences, and shall I forget them? or question them without cause at last?

Sect. VIII. And it is a subordinate help to my belief of immortality with Christ, to find so much evidence that angels have friendly communion with us here, and therefore we shall have communion with them hereafter. (Psalm xxxiv. 7, and xci. 11, 12; Luke xv. 10; 1 Cor. xi. 10; Heb. i. 14, and xii. 22, and xiii. 2; Matt. xviii. 10, and xxv. 31, and xiii. 39, 49; Acts v. 19, and viii. 26, and xii. 7, 23.) They have charge of us, and pitch their tents about us; they bear us up; they rejoice at our repentance; they are the regardful witnesses of our behavior; they are ministering spirits for our good; they are our angels beholding the face of our heavenly Father. They will come with Christ in glorious attendance at the great and joyful day, and, as his executioners, they will separate the just from the unjust.

And it is not only the testimony of Scripture by which we know their communion, with us, but also some degree of experience. Not only of old ~~And~~ they appear to the faithful as messengers from God, but of late times there have been testimonies of their ministration for us. Of which see *Zanchy de Angelis*, and Mr. J. Ambrose, of our communion with angels. Many a mercy doth God give us by their ministry, and they that are now so friendly to us, and suitable to our communion and help, and make up one society with us, do hereby greatly encourage us to hope that we are made for the same region, work, and company with these our blessed, loving friends. They were once in a life of trial, it seems, as we are now, though not on earth. (Jude 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4.) And they that overcame and are confirmed rejoice in our victory and confirmation. It is not an uninhabited world which is above us, nor such as is beyond our capacity and hope. We are come to an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the perfected just, who together have discreet quantity, or numerical difference, notwithstanding their happy union and communion.

Sect. 1. IX. And Satan himself, though unwillingly, hath many ways helped my belief of our immortality, and future hopes.*

* The particulars of this argument are omitted.—Ed.

Few men, I think, that observe themselves, have not at some time had experience of such inward temptations, as show that the author of them is an invincible enemy. All which tells us, 1. That there are individual spirits. 2. Yea, devils that seek man's misery. 3. And that by the way of sin, and consequently that a future happiness or misery must be expected by us all.

Sect. 1. X. But the great and sure prognostics of our immortal happiness, is from the renewing operations of the Spirit of holiness on the soul. 1. That such a renewing work there is, all true believers in some measure feel. 2. And that it is the earnest of heaven, is proved thus.

Sect. 2. 1. If it be a change of greatest benefit to a man. 2. And if heaven be the very sum and end of it. 3. And if it overcome all fleshly, worldly opposition. 4. And can be wrought by none but God. 5. And was before promised by Jesus Christ to all sound believers. 6. And is universally wrought in them all, either only, or eminently above all others. 7. And was promised them as a pledge and earnest of glory; then it can be no less than such a pledge and earnest; but the former are all true, &c.

Sect. 3. 1. That the change is of grand importance unto man, appeareth in that it is the renovation of his mind, and will, and life. It repaireth his depraved faculties, it causeth man to live as man, who is degenerated to a life too like to brutes. By God's permitting many to live in blindness, wickedness, and confusion, and to be tormenters of themselves and one another, by temptations, injuries, wars, and cruelty, we the fuller see what it is that grace doth save men from, and what a difference it maketh in the world. Those that have lived unholy in their youth, do easily find the difference in themselves when they are renewed. But to them that have been piously inclined from their childhood, it is harder to discern the difference, unless they mark the case of others. If man be worth any thing, it is for the use that his faculties were made, and if he be not good for the knowledge, love, and service of his Creator, what is he good for? And certainly the generality of ungodly worldlings are undisposed to all such works as this, till the Spirit of Christ effectually change them. Men are slaves to sin till Christ thus make them free. (John

viii. 32, 33, 36; Rom. vi. 18; Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. viii. 2.) But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Cor. iii. 17.) If the divine nature and image, and the love of God shed abroad on the heart, be not our excellency, health, and beauty, what is? And that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John iii. 6.) Without Christ and his Spirit, we can do nothing. Our dead notions and reasons, when we see the truth, have not power to overcome temptations, nor to raise up man's soul to its original and end, nor to possess us with the love and joyful hopes of future blessedness. It were better for us to have no souls, than that those souls should be void of the Spirit of God.

Sect. 4. 2. And that heaven is the sum and end of all the Spirit's operations, appeareth in all that are truly conscious of them in themselves, and to them and others by all God's precepts, which the Spirit causeth us to obey, and the doctrine which it causeth us to believe, and by the description of all God's graces which he worketh in us. What is our knowledge and faith, but our knowledge and belief of heaven, as consisting in the glory and love of God there manifested, and as purchased by Christ, and given by his covenant? What is our hope but the hope of glory. (See Heb. xi. 1, and throughout; 1 Pet. i. 3, 21; Heb. vi. 11, 18, 19, and iii. 6; Tit. ii. 13, and iii. 7; Col. i. 5, 23, 27.) And through the Spirit, we wait for all this hope. (Gal. v. 5.) What is our love but a desire of communion with the blessed God initially here, and perfectly hereafter? As the sum of Christ's gospel was, "Take up the cross, forsake all here, and follow me, and thou shalt have a reward in heaven." (Luke xiv. 26, 33, and xviii. 22, 23.) And the consolation of his gospel is, "Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven." (Matt. v. 11, 12.) So the same is the sum of his Spirit's operations, for what he teacheth and commandeth that he worketh. For he worketh by that word, and the impress must be like the signet, what arm soever set it on. He sendeth not his Spirit to make men craftier than others for this world, but to make them wiser for salvation, and to make them more heavenly and holy. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Heavenly-ness is the Spirit's special work.

Sect. 5. 3. And in working this it conquereth the inward undisposedness and averseness of a fleshly, worldly mind and will, and the customs of a carnal life; and the outward temptations of Satan, and all the allurements of the world. Christ first overcame the world, and teacheth and causeth us to overcome it; even its flatteries and its frowns; our faith is our victory. Whether this victory be easy, and any honor to the Spirit of Christ, let our experience of the wickedness of the ungodly world, and of our own weakness, and of our falls when the Spirit of God forsaketh us, be our informer.

Sect. 6. 4. And that none but God can do this work on the soul of man, both the knowledge of causes and experience prove. The most learned, wise, and holy teachers cannot (as they confess and show); the wisest and most loving parents cannot, and therefore must pray to him that can; the greatest princes cannot; evil angels neither can nor will. What good angels can do on the heart we know not; but we know that they do nothing, but as the obedient ministers of God. And (though we have some power on ourselves, yet) that we ourselves cannot do it; that we cannot quicken, illuminate, or sanctify ourselves, and that we have nothing but what we have received, conscience and experience fully tell us.

Sect. 7. 5. And that Christ promised this Spirit in a special measure to all true believers, that it should be in them his advocate, agent, seal, and mark, is yet visible in the gospel; yea, and in the former prophets. (Isa. xlv. 34; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, and xxxvii. 14; Joel ii. 28, 29, Ezek. xi. 19, and xviii. 31; Eph. i. 13; John iii. 5, and iv. 23, 24, and vi. 63, and vii. 39; John i. 33, and xiv. 16, 26; Acts i. 5, 8; John xv. 26, and xvi. 7—9, &c.) Indeed the Spirit here, and heaven hereafter, are the chief of all the promises of Christ.

Sect. 8. 6. And that this Spirit is given (not to hypocrites that abuse Christ, and do not seriously believe him, nor to mere pretending, nominal Christians, but) to all that sincerely believe the gospel, is evident not only to themselves in certainty, (if they are in a condition to know themselves,) but to others in part by the effects; they have other ends, other affections, other lives, than the rest of mankind have; though their heavenly nature and design be the less discerned and honored in the world, because their chiefest difference

is out of the sight of man, in the heart, and in their secret actions, and because their imperfections blemish them, and because the malignant world is by strangeness and enmity an incompetent judge, yet it is discernible to others, that they live upon the hopes of a better life, and their heavenly interest is it that over-ruleth all the adverse interests of this world, and that in order thereunto they live under the conduct of divine authority, and that God's will is highest and most prevalent with them, and that to obey and please him as far as they know it is the greatest business of their lives, though ignorance and adverse flesh do make their holiness and obedience imperfect. The universal noise and opposition of the world against them, do show that men discern a very great difference, which error, and cross interests, and carnal inclinations, render displeasing to those who find them condemned by their heavenly designs and conversations.

Sect. 9. But whether others discern it, or deny it, or detest it, the true believer is conscious of it in himself; even when he groaneth to be better, to believe, and trust, and love God more, and to have more of the heavenly life and comforts, those very desires signify another appetite and mind, than worldlings have; and even when his frailties and weaknesses make him doubt of his own sincerity, he would not change his governor, rule, or hopes, for all that the world can offer him. He hath the witness in himself, that there is in believers a sanctifying Spirit, calling up their minds to God and glory, and warring victoriously against the flesh; (1 John v. 9—11; Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii.; Phil. iii. 7—15;) so that to will is present with them; and they love and delight in a holy conformity to their rule, and it is never so well and pleasant with them, as when they can trust and love God most; and in their worst and weakest condition, they would fain be perfect. This Spirit, and its renewing work, so greatly different from the temper and desires of worldly men, is given by Christ to all sound believers.

Sect. 10. It is true, that some that know not of an incarnate Savior, have much in them that is very laudable; whether it be real saving holiness, and whether Abraham were erroneous in thinking that even the Sodoms of the world were likely to have had fifty righteous persons in them, I am not now to inquire: but it is sure, 1.

That the world had really a Savior, about four thousand years before Christ's incarnation ; even the God of pardoning mercy, who promised and undertook what after was performed, and shall be to the end. 2. And that the Spirit of this Savior did sanctify God's elect from the beginning ; and gave them the same holy and heavenly dispositions (in some degree) before Christ's incarnation, as is given since ; yea, it is called "The Spirit of Christ," which was before given. (1 Pet. i. 11,) 3. That this Spirit was then given to more than the Jews. 4. That Christ hath put that part of the world that hear not of his incarnation into no worse a condition than he found them in : that as the Jews' covenant of peculiarity was no repeal of the universal law of grace, made by God with fallen mankind, in Adam and Noah ; so the covenant of grace of the second edition, made with Christ's peculiar people, is no repeal of the fore-said law in the first edition, to them that hear not of the second. 5. That all that wisdom and goodness, that is in any without the christian church, is the work of the Spirit of the Redeemer ; as the light which goeth before sun-rising, and after sun-setting, and in a cloudy day, is of the same sun which others see, even to them that see not the sun itself. 6. That the liker any without the church are to the sanctified believers, the better they are, and the more unlike the worse ; so that all these six things being undeniable, it appeareth, that it is the same Spirit of Christ, which now giveth all men what real goodness is any where to be found. But it is notorious that no part of the world is, in heavenliness and virtue, comparable to true and serious Christians.

Sect. 11. 7. And let it be added, that Christ, (Eph. i. 14 ; 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5 ; Rom. viii. 23 ; 2 Tim. ii. 19 ; Eph. i. 13, and iv. 30 ; 1 John v. 9, 10 ; Heb. x. 15,) who promised the greatest measures of the Spirit, (which he accordingly hath given,) did expressly promise this, as a means and pledge, first fruits, and earnest, of the heavenly glory : and, therefore, it is a certain proof, that such a glory we shall have. He that can and doth give us a spiritual change or renovation, which in its nature and tendency is heavenly, and sets our hopes and hearts on heaven, and turneth the endeavors of our lives to the seeking of a future blessedness, and told us, be-

fore-hand, that he would give us this preparatory grace, as the earnest of that felicity, may well be trusted to perform his word in our actual glorification.

Sect. 12. And now, O weak and fearful soul ! why shouldest thou draw back, as if the case were yet left doubtful ? Is not thy foundation firm ? Is not the way of life, through the valley of death, made safe by him that conquereth death ? Art thou not yet delivered from the bondage of thy fears, when the gaoler and executioner, who had the power of death, hath, by Christ, been put out of his power, as to thee ? Is not all this evidence true and sure ? Hast thou not the witness in thyself ? Hast thou not found the motions, the effectual operations, the renewing changes, of this spirit in thee long ago ? And is he not still the agent and witness of Christ, residing and operating in thee ? Whence else are thy groanings after God ; thy desires to be nearer to his glory ; to know him better ; to love him more ? Whence came all the pleasure thou hast had in his sacred truth, and ways, and service ? Who else overcame thy folly, and pride, and vain desires, so far as they are overcome ? Who made it thy choice to sit at the feet of Christ, and hear his word, as the better part, and to despise the honors and preferments of the world, and to account them all as dung and dross ? Who breathed in thee all those requests that thou hast sent up to God ? Overvalue not corrupted nature, it bringeth not forth such fruits as these : if thou doubt of that, remember what thou wast in the hour of temptation, even of poor and weak temptations. And how small a matter hath drawn thee to sin, when God did but leave thee to thyself. Forget not the days of youthful vanity : overlook not the case of the miserable world, even of thy sinful neighbors, who, in the midst of light still live in darkness, and hear not the loudest calls of God : look about on thousands that, in the same land, and under the same teaching, and after the greatest judgment and deliverance, run on to all excess of riot, and, as past feeling, as greedily vicious and unclean. Is it no work of Christ's Spirit that hath made thee to differ ? Thou hast nothing to boast of, and much to be humbled for ; but thou hast also much to be thankful for. Thy holy desires are, alas ! too weak ; but they are holy : thy love hath been too cold ; but it is holiness, and the most holy

God, that thou hast loved. Thy hopes in God have been too low ; but it is God thou hast hoped in, and his love and glory thou hast hoped for. Thy prayers have been too dull and interrupted ; but it is holiness and heaven that thou hast most prayed for. Thy labors and endeavors have been too slothful ; but it is God, and glory, and the good of mankind, that thou hast labored for. Though thy motion were too weak and slow, it hath been Godward ; and, therefore, it was from God. O bless the Lord, that hath not only given thee a word that beareth the image of God, and is sealed by uncontrolled miracles, to be the matter of thy belief, but hath also fulfilled his promises so oft and notably to thee, in the answer of prayers, and in great and convincing deliverances of thyself and many others ; and hath, by wonders, oft assisted thy faith ! Bless that God of light and love, who, besides the universal attestation of his word, long ago given to all the church, hath given thee the internal seal, the nearer in-dwelling attestation, the effects of power, light, and love, imprinted on thy nature, mind, and will, the witness in thyself, that the word of God is not a human dream, or lifeless thing ; that by regeneration hath been here preparing thee for the light of glory, as by generation he prepared thee to see this light, and converse with men. And wilt thou yet doubt and fear against all this evidence, experience, and foretaste ?

Sect. 13. I think it not needless labor to confirm my soul in the full persuasion of the truth of its own immortal nature, and of a future life of joy or misery to mankind, and of the certain truth of the christian faith ; the being of God, and his perfection, hath so great evidence, that I find no great temptation to doubt of it, any more than whether there be an earth, or a sun ; and the atheist seemeth to me to be in that no better than mad. The christian verity is known only by supernatural revelation ; but by such revelation it is so attested externally to the world, and internally to holy souls, as maketh faith the ruling, victorious, consolatory principle, by which we must live, and not by sight ; but the soul's immortality and reward hereafter is of a middle nature, viz., of natural revelation, but incomparably less clear than the being of a God ; and therefore, by the addition of evangelical (supernatural) revelation, is made to us much

more clear and sure. And I find among the infidels of this age, that most who deny the christian verity, do almost as much deny or question the retribution of a future life. And they that are fully satisfied of this, do find Christianity so excellently congruous to it, as greatly facilitateth the work of faith. Therefore, I think, that there is scarce any verity more needful to be thoroughly digested into a full assurance, than this of the soul's immortality, and hope of future happiness.

Sect. 14. And when I consider the great unlikeness of men's hearts and lives to such a belief, as we all profess, I cannot but fear, that not only the ungodly, but most that truly hope for glory, have a far weaker belief (in habit and act) of the soul's immortality, and the truth of the gospel, than they seem to take notice of in themselves. Can I be certain, or fully persuaded, (in habit and act) of the future rewards and punishments of souls, and that we shall be all shortly judged, as we have lived here, and yet not despise all the vanities of this world, and set my heart, with resolution and diligence, to the preparation which must be made by a holy, heavenly, fruitful life, as one whose soul is taken up with the hopes and fears of things of such unspeakable importance. Who could stand dallying, as most men do, at the door of eternity, that did verily believe his immortal soul must be shortly there? Though such an one had no certainty of his own particular title to salvation, the certainty of such a grand concernment (that joy or misery is at hand) would surely awaken him to try, cry, or search; to beg, to strive, to watch, to spare no care, or cost, or labor, to make all sure in a matter of such weight; it could not be but he would do it with speed, and do it with a full resolved soul, and do it with earnest zeal and diligence. What man, that once saw the things which we hear of, even heaven and hell, would not afterwards, (at least in deep regard and seriousness,) exceed the most resolved believer that you know. One would think, in reason, it should be so thought: I confess a wicked heart is very senseless.

Sect. 15. I do confess, that there is much weakness of the belief of things unseen, where yet there is sincerity; but surely there will be some proportion between our belief and its effects. And where

there is little regard, or fear, or hopes, or sorrow, or joy, or resolved diligence for the world to come, I must think that there is (in act at least) but little belief of it, and that such persons little know themselves, how much they secretly doubt, whether it be true. I know that most complain, almost altogether, of the uncertainty of their title to salvation, and little of their uncertainty of a heaven and hell ; but were they more certain of this, and truly persuaded of it at the heart, it would do more to bring them to that serious, resolved faithfulness in religion, which would help them more easily to be sure of their sincerity, than long examinations, and many marks talked of, without this, will do.

Sect. 16. And I confess, that the great wisdom of God hath not thought meet, that in the body we should have as clear, and sensible, and lively apprehensions of heaven and hell, as sight would cause. For that would be to have too much of heaven or hell on earth ; for the gust would follow the perception, and so full a sense would be some sort of a possession, which we are not fit for in this world. And, therefore, it must be a darker revelation than sight would be, that it may be a lower perception, lest this world and the next should be confounded ; and faith and reason should be put out of office, and not duly tried, exercised, and fitted for reward ; but yet faith is faith, and knowledge is knowledge ; and he that verily believeth such great, transcendent things, though he see them not, will have some proportionable affections and endeavors.

Sect. 17. I confess also, that man's soul, in flesh, is not fit to bear so deep a sense of heaven and hell as sight would cause ; because it here operateth on and with the body, and according to its capacity, which cannot bear so deep a sense without distraction, by screwing up the organs too high, till they break, and so overdoing, would undo all ; but yet there is an overruling seriousness, which a certain belief of future things must needs bring the soul to, that truly hath it : and he that is careful and serious for this world, and looketh after a better, but with a slight, unwilling, half-regard, and, in the second place, must give me leave to think, that he believeth but as he liveth, and that his doubting, or unbelief, of the reality of a heaven and hell, is greater than his belief.

Sect. 18. O, then, for what should my soul more pray, than for a clearer, and stronger faith? I believe, Lord, help my unbelief! I have many a thousand times groaned to thee under the burden of this remnant of darkness and unbelief; I have many a thousand times thought of the evidences of the christian verity, and of the great necessity of a lively, powerful, active faith: I have begged it; I have cried to thee night and day, Lord, increase my faith! I have written and spoken that to others which might be most useful to myself, to raise the apprehensions of faith yet higher, and make them liker those of sense; but yet, yet Lord, how dark is this world! What a dungeon is this flesh! How little clearer is my sight, and little quicker are my perceptions, of unseen things, than long ago! Am I at the highest that man on earth can reach, and that when I am so dark and low! Is there no growth of these apprehensions more to be expected? Doth the soul cease its increase in vigorous perception, when the body ceaseth its increase, or vigor, of sensation? Must I sit down in so low a measure, while I am drawing nearer to the things believed; and am almost there, where belief must pass into sight and love? Or must I take up with the passive silence and inactivity, which some friars persuade us is nearer to perfection; and, under pretence of annihilation and receptivity, let my sluggish heart alone, and say, that in this neglect I wait for thy operations? O let not a soul, that is driven from this world, and weary of vanity, and can think of little else but immortality, that seeks and cries both night and day for the heavenly light, and fain would have some foretaste of glory, and some more of the first-fruits of the promised joys, let not such a soul either long, or cry, or strive in vain! Punish not my former grieving of thy Spirit, by deserting a soul that crieth for thy grace, so near its great and inconceivable change. Let me not languish in vain desires, at the door of hope; nor pass with doubtful thoughts and fears, from this vale of misery. Which should be the season of triumphant faith, and hope, and joy, if not when I am entering on the world of joy? O thou that hast left us so many consolatory words of promise, that our joy may be full; send, oh! send, the promised Comforter, without whose approaches and heavenly beams, when all is said, and a thousand thoughts and strivings have been essayed, it will still be night and winter with the soul.

Sect. 19. But have I not expected more particular and more sensitive conceptions of heaven, and the state of blessed souls, than I should have done, and remained less satisfied, because I expected such distinct perceptions to my satisfaction, which God doth not ordinarily give to souls in flesh? I fear it hath been too much so; a distrust of God, and a distrustful desire to know much (good and evil) for ourselves, as necessary to our quiet and satisfaction, was that sin which hath deeply corrupted man's nature, and is more of our common pravity, than is commonly observed; I find that this distrust of God; and my Redeemer, hath had too great a hand in my desires of a distincter and more sensible knowledge. I know that I should implicitly, and absolutely, and quietly, trust my soul into my Redeemer's hands; (of which I must speak more anon;) and it is not only for the body, but also for the soul, that a distrustful care is our great sin and misery. But yet we must desire that our knowledge and belief may be as distinct and particular as God's revelations are; and we can love no further than we know; and the more we know of God and glory, the more we shall love, desire, and trust him. It is a known, and not merely an unknown God and happiness, that the soul doth joyfully desire; and if I may not be ambitious of too sensible and distinct perceptions here, of the things unseen; yet must I desire and beg the most fervent and sensible love to them that I am capable of. I am willing (in part) to take up with that unavoidable ignorance, and that low degree of such knowledge, which God confineth us to in the flesh, so be it he will give me but such consolatory foretastes in love and joy, which such a general, imperfect knowledge may consist with, that my soul may not pass with distrust and terror, but with suitable, triumphant hopes to the everlasting pleasures.

O Father of lights! who givest wisdom to them that ask it of thee, shut not up this sinful soul in darkness! leave me not to grope in unsatisfied doubts, at the door of the celestial light! or if my knowledge must be general, let it be clear and powerful; and deny me not now the lively exercise of faith, hope, and love, which are the stirrings of the new creature, and the dawnings of the everlasting light, and the earnest of the promised inheritance.

Sect. 20. But we are oft ready to say with Cicero, when he had been reading such as Plato, that, while the book is in our hands, we seem confident of our immortality, and when we lay it by, our doubts return; so our arguments seem clear and cogent, and yet when we think not of them, with the best advantage, we are oft surprised with fear, lest we should be mistaken, and our hopes be vain; and hereupon (and from the common fear of death, that even good men too often manifest) the infidels gather, that we do but force ourselves into such a hope as we desire to be true, against the tendency of man's nature, and that we were not made for a better world.

Sect. 21. But this fallacy ariseth from men's not distinguishing,
 1. Sensitive fears from rational uncertainty, or doubts. 2. And the mind that is in the darkness of unbelief, from that which hath the light of faith.

I find in myself too much of fear, when I look into eternity, interrupting and weakening my desires and joy. But I find that it is very much an irrational, sensitive fear, which the darkness of man's mind, the greatness of the change, the dreadful majesty of God, and man's natural averseness to die, do, in some degree, necessitate, even when reason is fully satisfied that such fears are consistent with certain safety. If I were bound with the strongest chains, or stood on the surest battlements, on the top of a castle or steeple, I could not possibly look down without fear, and such as would go near to overcome me; and yet I should be rationally sure that I am there fast and safe, and cannot fall. So is it with our prospect into the life to come: fear is oft a necessitated passion: when a man is certain of his safe foundation, it will violently rob him of the comfort of that certainty: yea, it is a passion that irrationally doth much to corrupt our reason itself, and would make us doubt because we fear, though we know not why: and a fearful man doth hardly trust his own apprehensions of his safety, but, among other fears, is still ready to fear lest he be deceived: like timorous, melancholy persons about their bodies, who are ready still to think that every little distemper is a mortal symptom, and that worse is still nearer them than they feel, and they hardly believe any words of hope.

Sect. 22. And Satan, knowing the power of these passions, and having easier access to the sensitive than to the intellective faculties, doth labor to get in at this backdoor, and to frighten poor souls into doubt and unbelief: and in timorous natures he doth it with too great success, as to the consolatory acts of faith. Though yet God's mercy is wonderfully seen in preserving many honest, tender souls from the damning part of unbelief, and, by their fears, preserveth them from being bold with sin: when many bold and impudent sinners turn infidels, or atheists, by forfeiting the helps of grace.

Sect. 23. And indeed, irrational fears have so much power to raise doubts, that they are seldom separated; insomuch that many scarce know, or observe, the difference between doubts and fears: and many say they not only fear but doubt, when they can scarce tell why, as if it were no intellectual act which they meant, but an irrational passion.

Sect. 24. If, therefore, my soul see undeniable evidence of immortality; and if it be able, by irrefragable argument, to prove the future blessedness expected; and if it be convinced that God's promises are true, and sufficiently sealed and attested by him, to warrant the most confident belief; and if I trust my soul and all my hopes upon this word, and evidences of truth, it is not, then, our averseness to die, nor the sensible fears of a soul that looketh into eternity, that invalidate any of the reasons of my hope, nor prove the unsoundness of my faith.

Sect. 25. But yet these fears do prove its weakness; and were they prevalent against the choice, obedience, resolutions, and endeavors of faith, they would be prevalent against the truth of faith, or prove its nullity; for faith is trust; and trust is a securing, quieting thing. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" was a just reproof of Christ to his disciples, when sensible dangers raised up their fears. For the established will hath a political or imperfect, though not a despotical and absolute, power over our passions. And therefore our fears do show our unbelief, and stronger faith is the best means of conquering even irrational fears? "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted in me? trust in God," &c. Psalm xlii.,) is a needful way of chiding a timorous heart.

Sect. 26. And though many say that faith hath not evidence, and think that it is an assent of the mind, merely commanded by the empire of the will, without a knowledge of the verity of the testimony; yet, certainly, the same assent is ordinarily in the Scriptures called, indifferently, knowing and believing: and as a bare command, will not cause love, unless we perceive an amiableness in the object, so a bare command of the law, or of the will, cannot alone cause belief, unless we perceive a truth in the testimony believed: for it is a contradiction; or an act without its object. And truth is perceived only so far as it is some way evident: for evidence is nothing but the objective perceptibility of truth; or that which is metaphorically called light. So that we must say that faith hath not sensible evidence of the invisible things believed; but faith is nothing else but the willing perception of the evidence of truth in the word of the assertor, and a trust therein. We have, and must have, evidence that Scripture is God's word, and that his word is true, before, by any command of the word or will, we can believe it.

Sect. 27. I do, therefore, neither despise evidence as unnecessary, nor trust to it alone as the sufficient total cause of my belief; for if God's grace do not open mine eyes, and come down in power upon my will, and insinuate into it a sweet acquaintance with the things unseen, and a taste of their goodness to delight my soul, no reasons will serve to stablish and comfort me, how undeniable soever: reason is fain first to make use of notions, words, or signs; and to know terms, propositions, and arguments, which are but means to the knowledge of things, is its first employment, and that, alas! which multitudes of learned men do take up with: but it is the illumination of God that must give us an effectual acquaintance with the things spiritual and invisible, which these notions signify, and to which our organical knowledge is but a means.

Sect. 28. To sum up all, that our hopes of heaven have a certain ground appeareth, I. From nature: II. From grace: III. From other works of gracious providence.

I. i. From the nature of man: 1. Made capable of it. 2. Obligated, even by the law of nature to seek it before all. 3. Naturally desiring perfection, (1.) Habitual: (2.) Active: And, (3.) Objective.

ii. And from the nature of God, 1. As good and communicative. 2. As holy and righteous. 3. As wise; making none of his works in vain.

Sect. 29. II. From grace, 1. Purchasing it. 2. Declaring it by a messenger from heaven, both by word, and by Christ's own (and others') resurrection. 3. Promising it. 4. Sealing that promise by miracles there. 5. And by the work of sanctification, to the end of the world.

Sect. 30. III. By subordinate providence. 1. God's actual governing the world by the hopes and fears of another life. 2. The many helps which he giveth us for a heavenly life, and for attaining it (which are not vain.) 3. Specially the ministration of angels, and their love to us, and communion with us. 4. And, by accident, devils themselves convince us. (1.) By the nature of their temptations. (2.) &c. * * *

BEING WITH CHRIST.

Sect. 1. II. Having proved that faith and hope have a certain, future happiness to expect, the text directeth me next to consider why it is described by "being with Christ;" viz. *I.* What is included in our "being with Christ." *II.* That we shall be with him. *III.* Why we shall be with him.

Sect. 2. To be with Christ, includeth, i. Presence. ii. Union. iii. Communion, or participation of felicity with him.

Sect. 3. i. *Quest.* Is it Christ's Godhead, or his human soul, or his human body, that we shall be present with, and united to, or all? *Answ.* It is all, but variously.

Sect. 4. 1. We shall be present with the divine nature of Christ. *Quest.* But are we not always so? And are not all creatures so? *Answ.* Yes, as his essence comprehendeth all place and beings; but not as it is operative, and manifested in and by his glory. Christ directeth our hearts and tongues to pray "Our Father, which art in heaven:" and yet he knew that all place is in and with God; because it is in heaven that he gloriously operateth and shineth forth to holy souls: even as man's soul is eminently said to be in the head, because it understandeth and reasoneth in the head, and not in the foot, or hand, though it be also there. And as we look a man in the

face when we talk to him, so we look up to heaven when we pray to God. God who is, and operateth as, the root of nature, in all the works of creation, (for in him, we live, and move, and are,) and by the way of grace in all the gracious, doth operate, and is, by the works and splendor of his glory, eminently in heaven: by which glory, therefore, we must mean some created glory: for his essence hath no inequality.

Sect. 5. 2. We shall be present with the human nature of Christ, both soul and body: but here our present narrow thoughts must not too boldly presume to resolve the difficulties which, to a distinct understanding of this, should be overcome: for we must not here expect any more than a dark and general knowledge of them: as, 1. What is the formal difference between Christ's glorified body, and his flesh on earth? 2. Where Christ's glorified body is, and how far it extendeth. 3. Wherein the soul and the glorified body differ, seeing it is called a spiritual body: these things are beyond our present reach.

Sect. 6. (1.) For what conceptions can we have of a spiritual body, save that it is pure, incorruptible, invisible to mortal eyes, and fitted to the most perfect state of the soul? How near the nature of it is to a spirit, (and so to the soul,) and how far they agree, or differ, in substance, extensiveness, divisibility, or activity, little do we know.

Sect. 7. (2.) Nor do we know where and how far Christ's body is present by extent. The sun is commonly taken for a body, and its motive, illuminative, and calefactive beams, are, by the most probable philosophy, taken to be a real emanant part of its substance, and so that it is essentially as extensive as those beams; that is, it at once filleth all our air, and toucheth the surface of the earth; and how much further it extendeth we cannot tell. And what difference there is between Christ's glorified body and the sun, in purity, splendor, extent, or excellency of nature, little do poor mortals know: and so of the rest.

Sect. 8. Let no man, therefore, cavil, and say, 'How can a whole world of glorified bodies be all present with the one body of Christ, when each must possess its proper room?' for, as the body of the so-

lar beams, and the extensive air, are so compresent, as that none can discern the difference of the places which they possess, and a world of bodies are present with them both, so may all our bodies be with Christ's body, and that without any real confusion.

Sect. 9. ii. Besides presence with Christ, there will be such an union as we cannot now distinctly know. A political, relative union is past doubt, such as subjects have in one kingdom with their king; but little know we how much more. We see that there is a wonderful, corporeal continuity, or contact, among the material works of God; and the more spiritual, pure, and noble, the more inclination each nature hath to union. Every plant on earth hath an union with the whole earth in which it liveth; they are real parts of it. And what natural conjunction our bodies shall have to Christ's, and what influence from it, is past our knowledge. Though his similitudes in John xv. and vi., and Eph. v., and 1 Cor. xii., seem to extend far, yet being but similitudes, we cannot fully know how far.

Sect. 10. The same, *variatis variandis*, we may say of our union with Christ's human soul. Seeing souls are more inclinable to union than bodies, when we see all vegetables to be united parts of one earth, and yet to have each one its proper individuating form and matter, we cannot, though animals seem to walk more disjunct, imagine that there is no kind of union or conjunction of invisible souls; though they retain their several substances and forms: nor yet that our bodies shall have a nearer union with Christ's body than our souls with his soul. But the nature, manner, and measure of it, we know not.

Sect. 11. Far be it from us to think that Christ's glorified, spiritual body, is such in forms, parts, and dimensions, as his earthly body was. That it hath hands, feet, brains, heart, stomach, liver, intestines, as on earth: or, that it is such a compound of earth, water, and air, as here it was, and of such confined extent: for then, as his disciples and a few Jews only were present with him, and all the world besides were absent, and had none of his company, so it would be in heaven. But it is such as not only Paul, but all true believers in the world, from the creation to the end, shall be with Christ and see his glory: and though inequality of fitness, or degrees of holiness, will make an inequality of glory, no man can prove an

inequality, by local distance, from Christ; or, if such there be, for it is beyond our reach, yet none in heaven are at such a distance from him as not to enjoy the felicity of his presence.

Sect. 12. Therefore, when we dispute against them that hold transubstantiation, and the ubiquity of Christ's body, we do assuredly conclude that sense is judge; whether there be real bread and wine present, or not; but it is no judge, whether Christ's spiritual body be present or not, no more than whether an angel be present. And we conclude that Christ's body is not infinite, or immense, as is his godhead; but what are its dimensions, limits, or extent, and where it is absent, far be it from us to determine, when we cannot tell how far the sun extendeth its secondary substance, or emanant beams; nor well what locality is as to Christ's soul, or any spirit, if to a spiritual body.

Sect. 13. Their fear is vain and carnal, who are afraid lest their union with Christ, or one another, will be too near; even lest thereby they lose their individuation, as rivers that fall into the sea, or extinguished candles, whose fire is after but a sunbeam, or part of the common element of fire in the air, or as the vegetative spirits which, in autumn, retire from the leayes into the branches and trunk of the tree. I have proved before, that our individuation, or numerical existence, ceaseth not; and that no union is to be feared, were it never so sure, which destroyeth not the being, or formal powers, or action of the soul; and that it is the great radical disease of selfishness, and want of holy love to God and our Saviour, and one another, which causeth these unreasonable fears, even that selfishness which now maketh men so partially desirous of their own wills and pleasure in comparison of God's, and their own felicity in comparison of others, and which maketh them so easily bear God's injuries, and the sufferings of a thousand others, in comparison of their own. But he that put a great desire of the body's preservation into the soul, while it is its form, will abate that desire when the time of separation is come, because there is then no use for it till the resurrection; else it would be a torment to the soul.

Sect. 14. iii. And as we shall have union, so also communion, with the divine and human nature of Christ respectively; both as

they will be the objects of our soul's most noble and constant acts, and as they will be the fountain or communicative cause of our receptions.

Sect. 15. 1. We find now that our various faculties have various objects, suitable to their natures. The objects of sense are things sensible, and the objects of imagination things imaginable, and the objects of intellection things intelligible, and the objects of the will things amiable. The eye, which is a nobler sense than some others, hath light for its object, which, to other senses, is none : and so of the rest. Therefore we have cause to suppose, that as far as our glorified souls and our spiritual, glorified bodies will differ, so far Christ's glorified soul and body will, respectively, be their several objects ; and beholding the glory of both will be part of our glory.

Sect. 16. Yet it is not hence to be gathered, that the separated soul, before the resurrection, shall not have Christ's glorified body for its object ; for the objects of the body are also the objects of the soul, or, to speak more properly, the objects of sense are also the objects of intellection and will, though all the objects of the intellect and will are not objects of sense. The separated soul can know Christ's glorified body, though our present bodies cannot see a soul. But how much our spiritual bodies will excel in capacity and activity these passive bodies, that have so much earth and water, we cannot tell.

Sect. 17. And though now our souls are as a candle in a lantern, and must have extrinsic objects admitted by the senses before they can be understood, yet it followeth not that therefore a separated soul cannot know such objects : 1. Because it now knoweth them abstractively, per species, because its acts of ratiocination is compound as to the cause (soul and body). But it will then know such things intuitively, as now it can do itself, when then the lantern is cast by. 2. And whatever many of late, that have given themselves the title of ingenious, have said to the contrary, we have little reason to think that the sensitive faculty is not an essential, inseparable power of the same soul that is intellectual, and that sensation ceaseth to separated souls, however the modes of it may cease with their several uses and organs. To feel intellectually, or to understand, and will feelingly,

we have cause to think, will be the action of separated souls : and if so, why may they not have communion with Christ's body and soul, as their objects in their separated state ? 3. Besides that, we are uncertain whether the separated soul have no vehicle or body at all. Things unknown to us must not be supposed true or false. Some think that the sensitive soul is material, and, as a body to the intellectual, never separated. I am not of their opinion that make them two substances ; but I cannot say I am certain that they err. Some think that the soul is material, of a purer substance than things visible, and that the common notion of its substantiality meaneth nothing else but a pure, (as they call it,) spiritual materiality. Thus thought not only Tertullian, but almost all the old Greek doctors of the church that write of it, and most of the Latin, or very many, as I have elsewhere showed, and as Faustus reciteth them in the treatise answered by Mammerthus. Some think that the soul, as vegetative, is an igneous body, such as we call ether, or solar fire, or rather of a higher, purer kind ; and that sensation and intellection are those formal faculties which specifically difference it from inferior mere fire, or ether. There were few of the old doctors that thought it not some of these ways material ; and, consequently, extensive and divisible *per potentiam divinam*, though not naturally, or of its own inclination, because most strongly inclined to unity : and if any of all these uncertain opinions should prove true, the objections in hand will find no place. To say nothing of their conceit, who say, that as the spirit that retireth from the falling leaves in autumn, continueth to animate the tree, so man's soul may do, when departed, with that to which it is united, to animate some more noble, universal body. But as all these are the too bold cogitations of men that had better let unknown things alone, so yet they may be mentioned to refel that more perilous boldness which denieth the soul's action, which is certain, upon, at best, uncertain reasons.

Sect. 18. I may boldly conclude, notwithstanding such objections, that Christ's divine and human nature, soul and body, shall be the felicitating objects of intuition and holy love to the separated soul before the resurrection ; and that to be with Christ is to have such communion with him, and not only to be present where he is.

Sect. 19. 2. And the chief part of this communion will be that in which we are receptive; even Christ's communications to the soul. And as the infinite, incomprehensible Deity is the root, or first cause, of all communication, natural, gracious, and glorious, to being, motion, life, rule, reason, holiness, and happiness; and the whole creation is more dependent on God, than the fruit on the tree, or the plants on the earth, or the members on the body; (though yet they are not parts of the Deity, nor deified, because the communication is creative :) so God useth second causes in his communication to inferior natures. And it is more than probable, that the human soul of Christ, primarily, and his body, secondarily, are the chief second cause of influence and communication both of grace and glory, both to man in the body, and to the separated soul. And as the sun is first an efficient, communicative, second cause of seeing to the eye, and then is also the object of our sight, so Christ is to the soul.* For as God, so the Lamb is the light and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, and in his light we shall have light. Though he give up the kingdom to the Father, so far as that God shall be all in all, and his creature be fully restored to his favor, and there shall be need of a healing government no more, for the recovering of lapsed souls to God; yet sure he will not cease to be our Mediator, and to be the church's head, and to be the conveying cause of everlasting life, and light, and love to all his members. As now we live because he liveth, even as the branches in the vine, and the Spirit that quickeneth, enlighteneth, and sanctifieth us, is first the Spirit of Christ before it is ours, and is communicated from God, by him to us; so will it be in the state of glory, for we shall have our union and communion with him perfected, and not destroyed, or diminished. And unless I could be so proud as to think that I am, or shall be, the most excellent of all the creatures of God, and therefore nearest him, and above all others,

* This one truth will give great light into the controversies about God's gracious operations on the soul; for when he useth second causes, we see he operateth according to their limited aptitude; and Christ's human nature, and all other second causes, are limited, and operate variously and resistibly, according to the recipient's capacity.

how could I think that I am under the influence of no second cause, but have either grace or glory from God alone?

Sect. 20. So far am I from such arrogancy, as to think I shall be so near to God, as to be above the need and use of Christ and his communications, as that I dare not say that I shall be above the need and help of other subordinate causes; as I am now lower than angels, and need their help, and as I am under the government of my superiors, and, as a poor weak member, am little worth in comparison of the whole body, the church of Christ, and receive continual help from the whole, so, how far it will be thus in glory, I know not; but that God will still use second causes for our joy, I doubt not, and also that there will not be an equality; and that it will be consistent with God's all-sufficiency to us, and our felicity in him, that we shall forever have use for one another, and that to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and to be in Abraham's bosom, and to sit at Christ's right and left hand, in his kingdom, and to be ruler over ten cities, and to join with the heavenly host, or choir, in the joyful love and praise of God, and of the Lamb, and many such like, are not false nor useless notes and notions of our celestial glory.

Sect. 21. And, certainly, if I be with Christ, I shall be with all that are with Christ; even with all the heavenly society. Though these bodies of gross, passive matter must have so much room, that the earth is little enough for all its inhabitants; and those at the antipodes are almost as strange to us as if they were in another world; and those of another kingdom, another province, or county, and oft another parish, yea, another house, are strangers to us; so narrow is our capacity of communion here. Yet we have great cause to think, by many Scripture expressions, that our heavenly union and communion will be nearer, and more extensive; and that all the glorified shall know each other, or, at least, be far less distant, and less strange, than now we are. As I said before, when I see how far the sunbeams do extend, how they penetrate our closest glass, and puzzle them that say that all bodies are impenetrable; when I see how little they hinder the placing or presence of other creatures, and how intimately they mix themselves with all, and seem to possess the whole

region of the air, when yet the air seemeth itself to fill it, &c., I dare not think that glorified spirits, (no, nor spiritual bodies,) will be such strangers to one another, as we are here on earth.

Sect. 22. And I must needs say, that it is a pleasant thought to me, and greatly helpeth my willingness to die, to think that I shall go to all the holy ones, both Christ and angels, and departed, blessed souls. For, 1. God hath convinced me that they are better than I (each singly), and therefore more amiable than myself. 2. And that many are better than one, and the whole than a poor, sinful part, and the New Jerusalem is the glory of the creation. 3. God hath given me a love to all his holy ones, as such. 4. And a love to the work of love and praise, which they continually and perfectly perform to God. 5. And a love to the celestial Jerusalem, as it is complete, and to his glory shining in them. 6. And my old acquaintance, with many a holy person gone to Christ, doth make my thoughts of heaven the more familiar to me. O, how many of them could I name! 7. And it is no small encouragement to one that is to enter upon an unseen world, to think that he goeth not an untrodden path, nor enters into a solitary or singular state; but followeth all from the creation to this day, that have passed by death to endless life. And is it not an emboldening consideration, to think that I am to go no other way, nor to no other place or state, than all the believers and saints have gone to before me, from the beginning to this time? Of this more anon.

TO DEPART.

Sect. 1. But I must be loosed, or depart, before I can thus be with Christ. And I must here consider, I. From what I must depart. II. And how, or in what manner: and I must not refuse to know the worst.

Sect. 2. I. And, 1. I know that I must depart from this body itself, and the life which consisteth in the animating of it. These eyes must here see no more; this hand must move no more; these feet must walk no more; this tongue must speak no more. As much as I have loved and over-loved this body, I must leave it to the grave. There must it lie and rot in darkness, as a neglected and a loathed thing.

Sect. 3. This is the fruit of sin, and nature would not have it so : I mean the nature of this compound man ; but what, though it be so ?

1. It is but my shell, or tabernacle, and the clothing of my soul, and not itself. 2. It is but an elementary composition dissolved ; and earth going to earth, and water to water ; and air to air, and fire to fire, into that union which the elementary nature doth incline it.

3. It is but an instrument laid by when all its work is done, and a servant dismissed when his service is at an end. And what should I do with a horse, when I shall need to ride or travel no more, or with a pen, when I must write no more ? It is but the laying by the passive receiver of my soul's operations, when the soul hath no more to do upon it ; as I cast by my lute, or other instrument, when I have better employment than music to take up my time.

4. Or, at most, it is but as flowers die in the fall, and plants in winter, when the retiring spirits have done their work, and are undisposed to dwell in so cold and unmeet a habitation, as the season maketh their former matter then to be. And its retirement is not its annihilation, but its taking up a fitter place.

5. It is but a separation from a troublesome companion, and putting off a shoe that pinched me ; many a sad and painful hour I have had in this frail and faltering flesh ; many a weary night and day : what cares, what fears, what griefs, and what groans, hath this body cost me ! Alas ! how many hours of my precious time have been spent to maintain it, please it, or repair it ! How considerable a part of all my life hath been spent in necessary sleep and rest ; and how much in eating, drinking, dressing, physic ; and how much in laboring, or using means, to procure these and other necessities ! Many a hundred times I have thought, that it costeth me so dear to live, yea, to live a painful, weary life, that were it not for the work and higher ends of life, I had little reason to be much in love with it, or to be loth to leave it. And had not God put into our nature itself a necessary, unavoidable, sensitive love of the body, and of life, as he puts into the mother, and into every brute, a love of their young ones, how unclean, and impotent, and troublesome soever, for the propagation and continuance of man on earth ? Had God but left it to mere reason, without this necessary pre-engagement of our natures, it

would have been a matter of more doubt and difficulty than it is, whether this life should be loved and desired ; and no small number would daily wish that they had never been born : a wish that I have had much ado to forbear, even when I have known that it is sinful, and when the work and pleasure of my life have been such to overcome the evils of it as few have had.

6. Yea, to depart from such a body, is but to be removed from a foul, uncleanly, and sordid habitation. I know that the body of man and brutes is the curious, wonderful work of God, and not to be despised, nor injuriously dishonored, but admired, and well used ; but yet it is a wonder to our reason, that so noble a spirit should be so meanly housed ; and we may call it "our vile body," as the apostle doth. (Phil. iii. 21.) It is made up of the airy, watery, and earthly parts of our daily food, subacted and actuated by the fiery part, as the instrument of the soul. The greater part of the same food which, with great cost, and pomp, and pleasure, is first upon our tables, and then in our mouths, to-day, is to-morrow a fœtid, loathsome excrement, and cast out into the draught, that the sight and smell of that annoy us not, which yesterday was the sumptuous fruit of our abundance, and the glory of that which is called great housekeeping, and the pleasure of our eyes and taste. And is not the rest that turneth into blood and flesh, of the same general kind with that which is turned into loathsome filth ? The difference is, that it is fitter for the soul by the fiery spirits, yet longer to operate on and keep from corruption ; our blood and flesh are as stinking and loathsome a substance as our filthiest excrements, save that they are longer kept from putrefaction. Why then should it more grieve me, that one part of my food, which turneth into flesh, should rot and stink in the grave, than that all the rest should daily stink in the draught ? Yea, while it is within me, were it not covered from my sight, what a loathsome mass would my intestines appear ! If I saw what is in the guts, the mesentery, the ventricles of the brain, what filth, what bilious or mucous matter, and, perhaps, crawling worms, that are in the most proud or comely person, I should think that the cover of a cleaner skin, and the borrowed ornaments of apparel, make no great difference between such a body and a carcass (which may be also cov-

ered with an adorned coffin and monument, to deceive such spectators as see but outsides); the change is not so great of corruptible flesh, replete with such foetid excrements, into corrupted flesh, as some fools imagine.

7. Yet more : to depart from such a body is but to be loosed from the bondage of corruption, and from a clog and prison of the soul. I say not that God put a pre-existent soul into this prison penally, for former faults ; I must say no more than I can prove, or than I know ; but that body which was an apt servant to innocent man's soul, is become as a prison to him now ; what alteration sin made upon the nature of the body, as whether it be more terrene and gross than else it would have been, I have no reason to assert ; of earth or dust it was at first, and to dust it is sentenced to return. But no doubt but it hath its part in that dispositive deprivation which is the fruit of sin. We find that the soul, as sensitive, is so imprisoned, or shut up, in flesh, that sometimes it is more than one door that must be opened before the object and the faculty can meet. In the eye, indeed, the soul seemeth to have a window to look out at, and to be almost itself visible to others ; and yet there are many interposing tunicles, and a suffusion, or winking, can make the clearest sight to be as useless for the time as if it were none ; and if sense be thus shut up from its object, no wonder if reason also be under difficulties from corporeal impediments ; and if the soul that is yoked with such a body can go no faster than its heavy pace.

8. Yet further : to depart from such a body, is but to be separated from an accidental enemy, and one of our greatest and most hurtful enemies ; though still we say, that it is not by any default in the work of our Creator, but by the effects of sin, that it is such ; what could Satan, or any other enemy of our souls, have done against us without our flesh ? What is it but the interest of this body, that standeth in competition against the interest of our souls and God ? What else do the profane sell their heavenly inheritance for, as Esau his birthright ? No man loveth evil, as evil, but as some way a real or seeming good ; and what good is it but that which seemeth good for the body ? What else is the bait of ambition, covetousness, and sensuality, but the interest and pleasure of this flesh ? What taketh

up the thoughts and care which we should lay out upon things spiritual and heavenly, but this body and its life? What pleasures are they that steal away men's hearts from the heavenly pleasures of faith, hope, and love, but the pleasures of this flesh? This draweth us to sin; this hindereth us from and in our duty. This body hath its interest which must be minded, and its inordinate appetite which must be pleased; or else what murmurings and disquiet must we expect. Were it not for bodily interest, and its temptations, how much more innocently and holily might I live! I should have nothing to care for, but to please God, and to be pleased in him, were it not for the care of this bodily life. What employment should my will and love have, but to delight in God, and love him and his interest, were it not for the love of the body, and its concerns? By this the mind is darkened, and the thoughts diverted: by this our wills are perverted and corrupted, and, by loving things corporeal, contract a strangeness and aversion from things spiritual; by this, heart and time are alienated from God; our guilt is increased, and our heavenly desire and hopes destroyed; life made unholy and uncomfortable, and death made terrible; God and our souls separated, and life eternal set by, and in danger of being utterly lost. I know that it is the sinful soul that is in all this the chief cause and agent; but what is it but bodily interest that is its temptation, bait, and end? What but the body, and its life, and its pleasure, is the chief, objective, alluring cause of all this sin and misery? And shall I take such a body to be better than heaven, or be loth to be loosed from so troublesome a yoke-fellow, or to be separated from so burdensome and dangerous a companion.

Sect. 3. *Obj.* But I know this habitation, but the next I know not. I have long been acquainted with this body, and this world, but the next I am unacquainted with.

Ans. 1. If you know it, you know all that of it which I have mentioned before; you know it to be a burden and snare; I am sure I know, by long experience, that this flesh hath been a painful lodging to my soul, and this world as a tumultuous ocean, or like the uncertain and stormy region of the air. And well he deserveth bondage, pain, and enmity, who will love them because he is acquainted with them, and is loth to leave them because he hath had them long, and is afraid of being well because he hath been long sick.

3. And do you not know the next and better habitation? Is faith no knowledge? If you believe God's promise, you know that such a state there is; and you know, in general, that it is better than this world; and you know that we shall be in holiness and glorious happiness with Christ: and is this no knowledge? 3. And what we know not, Christ, that prepareth and promiseth it, doth know; and is that nothing to us, if really we trust our souls to him? He that knoweth not more good by heaven than by earth is yet so earthly and unbelieving, that it is no wonder if he be afraid and unwilling to depart.

Sect. 4. II. In departing from this body and life, I must depart from all its ancient pleasures: I must taste no more sweetness in meat, or drink, or rest, or sport, or any such thing, that now delighteth me; house and lands, and goods, and wealth, must all be left; and the place where I live must know me no more. All my possessions must be no more to me, nor all that I labored for, or took delight in, than if they had never been at all.

And what though it must be so? Consider, O my soul! 1. Thy ancient pleasures are all past already; thou lovest none of them by death, for they are all lost before, if immortal grace have not, by sanctifying them, made the benefits of them to become immortal. All the sweet draughts, and morsels, and sports, and laughs; all the sweet thoughts of thy worldly possessions, or thy hopes, that ever thou hadst till this present hour, are passed by, dead, and gone already. All that death doth to such as these is, to prevent such, that on earth thou shalt have no more.

2. And is not that the case of every brute, that hath no comfort from the prospect of another life, to repair his loss; and yet as our dominion diminisheth their pleasure while they live, by our keeping them under fear and labor, so, at our will, their lives must end. To please a gentleman's appetite for half an hour, or less, birds, beasts, and fishes, must lose life itself, and all the pleasure which light might have afforded them for many years; yea, perhaps many of these (birds and fishes at least) must die to become but one feast to a rich man, if not one ordinary meal. And is not their sensual pleasure of the same nature as ours? Meat is as sweet to them, and ease as welcome, and lust as strong (in season); and the pleasure that death

depriveth our flesh of, is such as is common to man with brutes; why then should it seem hard to us to lose that in the course of nature, which our wills deprive them of at our pleasure? When, if we are believers, we can say, that we do but exchange these delights of life for the greater delights of a life with Christ, which is a comfort which our fellow creatures (the brutes) have not.

3. And, indeed, the pleasures of life are usually embittered with so much pain, that to a great part of the world doth seem to exceed them; the vanity and vexation is so great and grievous as the pleasure seldom countervaileth. It is true, that nature desireth life, even under sufferings that are but tolerable, rather than to die; but that is not so much from the sensible pleasure of life, as from mere natural inclination; which God hath laid so deep, that free-will hath no power against it. As before I said, that the body of man is such a thing, that could we see through the skin (as men may look through a glass hive upon the bees) and see all the parts and motion, the filth and excrements, that are in it, the soul would hardly be willing to actuate, love, and cherish such a mass of unclean matter, and to dwell in such a loathsome place, unless God had necessitated it by nature (deeper than reason or sense) to such a love and such a labor, by the *pondus* or spring of inclination; even as the cow would not else lick the unclean calf, nor women themselves be at so much labor and trouble with their children, while there is little of them to be pleasing, but uncleanness, and crying, and helpless impatency, to make them wearisome, had not necessitating inclination done more hereto than any other sense or reason; even so I now say of the pleasure of living, that the sorrows are so much greater to multitudes than the sensible delight, that life would not be so commonly chosen and endured under so much trouble, were not men determined thereto by natural necessitating inclination; (or deterred from death by the fears of misery to the separated soul;) and yet all this kept not some, counted the best and wisest of the heathens, from taking it for the valor and wisdom of a man to make away his life in time of extremity, and from making this the great answer to them that grudge at God for making their lives so miserable, 'If the misery be greater than the good of life, why dost thou not end it? Thou mayest do that when thou wilt.'

Our meat and drink is pleasant to the healthful, but it costeth poor men so much toil, and labor, and care, and trouble to procure a poor diet for themselves, and their families, that, I think, could they live without eating and drinking, they would thankfully exchange the pleasure of it all, to be eased of their care and toil in getting it. And when sickness cometh, even the pleasantest food is loathsome.

4. And do we not willingly interrupt and lay by these pleasures every night, when we betake ourselves to sleep? It is possible, indeed, a man may then have pleasant dreams; but I think few go to sleep for the pleasure of dreaming; either no dreams, or vain, or troublesome dreams, are much more common. And to say that rest and ease is my pleasure, is but to say, that my daily labor and cares are so much greater than my waking pleasure, that I am glad to lay by both together. For what is ease but deliverance from weariness and pain? For in deep and dreamless sleep there is little positive sense of the pleasure of rest itself. But, indeed, it is more from nature's necessitated inclination to this self-easing and repairing means, than from the positive pleasure of it, that we desire sleep. And if we can thus be contented every night to die, as it were, to all our waking pleasures, why should we be unwilling to die to them at once?

5. If it be the inordinate pleasures forbidden of God, which you are loth to leave, those must be left before you die, or else it had been better for you never to have been born, yea, every wise and godly man doth cast them off with detestation. You must be against holiness on that account, as well as against death, and, indeed, the same cause which maketh men unwilling to live a holy life, hath a great hand in making them unwilling to die, even because they are loth to leave the pleasure of sin. If the wicked be converted, he must be gluttonous and drunken no more; he must live in pride, vain-glory, worldliness, and sensual pleasures no more, and therefore he draweth back from a holy life, as if it were from death itself. And so he is the loather to die, because he must have no more of the pleasures of his riches, pomp, and honors, his sports, and lust, and pleased appetite, for ever. But what is this to them that have mortified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof?

6. Yea, it is these forbidden pleasures which are the great impediments both of our holiness and our truest pleasures; and one of the reasons why God forbiddeth them, is, because they hinder us from better. And if for our own good we must forsake them when we turn to God, it must be supposed that they should be no reason against our willingness to die, but rather that to be free from the danger of them, we should be the more willing.

7. But the great satisfying answer of this objection is, that death will pass us to far greater pleasures, with which all these are not worthy to be compared. But of this more in due place.

Sect. 5. III. When I die, I must depart, not only from sensual delights, but from the more manly pleasures of my studies, knowledge, and converse with many wise and godly men, and from all my pleasure in reading, hearing, public and private exercises of religion, &c. I must leave my library, and turn over those pleasant books no more. I must no more come among the living, nor see the faces of my faithful friends, nor be seen of man. Houses, and cities, and fields, and countries, gardens, and walks, will be nothing as to me. I shall no more hear of the affairs of the world, of man, or wars, or other news, nor see what becomes of that beloved interest of wisdom, piety, and peace, which I desire may prosper, &c.

Ans. 1. Though these delights are far above those of sensual sinners, yet, alas! how low and little are they! How small is our knowledge in comparison of our ignorance! And how little doth the knowledge of learned doctors differ from the thoughts of a silly child! For from our childhood we take it in by drops, and as trifles are the matter of childish knowledge, so words, and notions, and artificial forms, do make up more of the learning of the world, than is commonly understood, and many such learned men know little more of any great and excellent things themselves, than rustics that are condemned by them for their ignorance. God, and the life to come, are little better known by them, if not much less, than by many of the unlearned. What is it but a child-game, that many logicians, rhetoricians, grammarians, yea, metaphysicians, and other philosophers, in their eagerest studies and disputes, are exercised in? Of how little us is it to know what is contained in many hundreds of the volumes

that fill our libraries! Yea, or to know many of the most glorious speculations in physics, mathematics, &c., which have given some the title of *Virtuosi*, and *Ingeniosi*, in these times, who have little the more wit or virtue to live to God, or overcome temptations from the flesh and world, and to secure their everlasting hopes. What pleasure or quiet doth it give to a dying man to know almost any of their trifles?

2. Yea, it were well if much of our reading and learning did us no harm, nay, more than good. I fear lest books are to some but a more honorable kind of temptation than cards and dice, lest many a precious hour be lost in them, that should be employed on much higher matters, and lest many make such knowledge but an unholy, natural, yea, carnal pleasure, as worldlings do the thoughts of their lands and honors, and lest they be the more dangerous by how much the less suspected. But the best is, it is a pleasure so fenced from the slothful with thorny labor of hard and long studies, that laziness saveth more from it than grace and holy wisdom doth. But, doubtless, fancy and the natural intellect may, with as little sanctity, live in the pleasure of reading, knowing, disputing, and writing, as others spend their time at a game at chess, or other ingenious sport.

For my own part, I know that the knowledge of natural things is valuable, and may be sanctified, much more theological theory, and when it is so, it is of good use; and I have little knowledge which I find not some way useful to my highest ends. And if wishing or money could procure more, I would wish and empty my purse for it; but yet if many score or hundred books which I have read, had been all unread, and I had that time now to lay out upon higher things, I should think myself much richer than now I am. And I must earnestly pray, the Lord forgive me the hours that I have spent in reading things less profitable, for the pleasing of a mind that would fain know all, which I should have spent for the increase of holiness in myself and others! and yet I must thankfully acknowledge to God, that from my youth he taught me to begin with things of greatest weight, and to refer most of my other studies thereto, and to spend my days under the motives of necessity and profit to myself, and those with whom I had to do. And I now think better of the course

of Paul, that determined to know nothing but a crucified Christ, among the Corinthians, that is, so to converse with them as to use, and glorying as if he knew nothing else, and so of the rest of the apostles and primitive ages. And though I still love and honor, (and am not of Dr. Colet's mind, who, as Erasmus saith, most slighted Augustine,) yet I less censure even that Carthage council which forbade the reading of the heathens' books of learning and arts, than formerly I have done. And I would have men savor most that learning in their health, which they will, or should, savor most in sickness, and near to death.

3. And, alas! how dear a vanity is this knowledge! That which is but theoretic and notional, is but a tickling delectation of the fancy or mind, little differing from a pleasant dream. But how many hours, what gazing of the wearied eye, what stretching thoughts of the impatient brain must it cost us, if we will attain to any excellency? Well saith Solomon, "Much reading is a weariness to the flesh, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." How many hundred studious days and weeks, and how many hard and tearing thoughts, hath my little, very little knowledge, cost me; and how much infirmity and painfulness to my flesh, increase of painful diseases, and loss of bodily ease and health! How much pleasure to myself of other kinds, and how much acceptance with men have I lost by it, which I might easily have had in a more conversant and plausible way of life! And when all is done, if I reach to know any more than others of my place and order, I must differ so much (usually) from them, and if I manifest not that difference, but keep all that knowledge to myself, I sin against conscience and nature itself. The love of man, and the love of truth, oblige me to be soberly communicative. Were I so indifferent to truth and knowledge, as easily to forbear their propagation, I must also be so indifferent to them, as not to think them worth so dear a price as they have cost me (though they are the free gifts of God.) As nature is universally inclined to the propagation of the kind by generation, so is the intellectual nature to the communication of knowledge, which yet hath its lust and inordinacy in proud, ignorant, hasty teachers and disputers, as the generating faculty hath in fornicators and adulterers.

But if I obey nature and conscience in communicating that knowledge which containeth my difference aforesaid, the dissenters too often take themselves disparaged by it, how peaceably soever I manage it: and as bad men take the piety of the godly to be an accusation of their impiety, so many teachers take themselves to be accused of ignorance, by such as condemn their errors by the light of truth: and if you meddle not with any person, yet take they their opinions to be so much their interest, as that all that is said against them they take as said against themselves. And then, alas! what envyings, what whispering disparagements, and what backbitings, if not malicious slanders and underminings, do we meet with from the carnal clergy! And O that it were all from them alone! and that among the zealous and suffering party of faithful preachers, there were not much of such iniquity, and that none of them preached Christ in strife and envy! It is sad that error should find so much shelter under the selfishness and pride of pious men, and that the friends of truth should be tempted to reject and abuse so much of it in their ignorance, as they do: but the matter of fact is too evident to be hid.

But, especially, if we meet with a clergy that are high, and have a great deal of worldly interest at the stake: or, if they be in councils and synods, and have got the major vote, they too easily believe that either their grandeur, reverence, names, or numbers, must give them the reputation of being orthodox, and in the right, and will warrant them to account and defame him as erroneous, heretical, schismatical, singular, factious, or proud, that presumeth to contradict them, and to know more than they. Of which not only the case of Nazianzen, Martin, Chrysostom, are sad proofs, but also the proceedings of too many general and provincial councils. And so our hard studies and darling truth must make us as owls, or reproached persons, among those reverend brethren, who are ignorant at easier rates, and who find it a far softer kind of life to think and say as the most or best-esteemed do, than to purchase reproach and obloquy so dearly.

And the religious people of the several parts will say as they hear their teachers do, and be the militant followers of their too militant

leaders : and it will be their house talk, their shop talk, their street talk, if not their church talk, that such an one is an erroneous, dangerous man, because he is not as ignorant and erroneous as they, especially if they be the followers of a teacher much exasperated by confutation, and engaged in the controversy ; and also if it should be suffering confessors that are contradicted, or men most highly esteemed for extraordinary degrees of piety : then, what cruel censures must he expect, who ever so tenderly would suppress their errors ?

Oh ! what sad instances of this are, 1. The case of the confessors in Cyprian's days, who, as many of his epistles show, became the great disturbers of that church. 2. And the Egyptian monks at Alexandria, in the days of Theophilus, who turned Anthropomorphites, and raised abominable tumults, with woful scandal, and odious bloodshed. 3. And O that this age had not yet greater instances to prove the matter than any of these !

And, now, should a man be loth to die, for fear of leaving such troublesome, costly learning and knowledge, as the wisest men can here attain ?

4. But the chief answer is yet behind. No knowledge is lost, but perfected, and changed for much nobler, sweeter, greater knowledge. Let men be never so uncertain in particular *de modo*, whether acquired habits of intellect and memory die with us, as being dependent on the body ; yet, by what manner soever, that a far clearer knowledge we shall have than is here attainable, is not to be doubted of. And the cessation of our present mode of knowing, is but the cessation of our ignorance and imperfection : as our wakening endeth a dreaming knowledge, and our maturity endeth the trifling knowledge of a child : for so saith the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. xiii. 8—12.) Love never faileth, and we can love no more than we know ; but whether there be prophecies they shall fail (that is, cease) : whether there be tongues they shall cease : whether there be knowledge, notional and abstractive, such as we have now, it shall vanish away : " When I was a child I spake as a child, understood as a child, I thought as a child ; but when I became a man, I put away childish things : for now we see through a glass (*per species*) darkly," as men understand a thing by a metaphor, parable, or riddle, " but then face

to face ;" even creatures intuitively, as in themselves naked and open to our sight. "Now, I know in part ;" (not *rem sed aliquid rei* ; in which sense Sanchez truly saith, '*nihil scitur* ;') "but then I shall know, even as I am known ; not as God knoweth us : " for our knowledge and his must not be so comparatively likened ; but as holy spirits know us both now and for ever, we shall both know and be known by immediate intuition.

If a physician be to describe the parts of a man, and the latent diseases of his patient, he is fain to search hard, and bestow many thoughts of it, besides his long reading and converse, to make him capable of knowing : and when all is done, he goeth much upon conjectures, and his knowledge is mixed with many uncertainties, yea, and mistakes ; but when he openeth the corpse, he seeth all, and his knowledge is more full, more true, and more certain ; besides that, it is easily and quickly attained, even by a present look. A contry-man knoweth the town, the fields, and rivers, where he dwelleth, yea, and the plants and animals, with ease and certain clearness, when he that must know the same things by the study of geographical writings and tables, must know them but with a general, and unsatisfactory, and oft a much mistaking kind of knowledge. Alas ! when our present knowledge hath cost a man the study of forty, or fifty, or sixty years, how lean and poor, how doubtful and unsatisfactory is it after all ! But when God will show us himself, and all things, and when heaven is know as the sun by its own light, this will be the clear, sure, and satisfactory knowledge : "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God ;" (Matt. v.) "And without holiness none can see him." (Heb. xii. 14.) This sight will be worthy the name of wisdom, when our present glimpse is but philosophy, a love and desire of wisdom. So far should we be from fearing death, through the fear of losing our knowledge, or any of the means of knowledge, that it should make us rather long for the world of glorious light, that we might get out of this darkness, and know all that with an easy look, to our joy and satisfaction, which here we know with troublesome doubtings, or not at all. Shall we be afraid of darkness in the heavenly light, or of ignorance, when we see the Lord of glory ?

Sect. 6. And as for the loss of sermons, books, and other means, surely it is no loss to cease the means when we have attained the end. Cannot we spare our winter clothes, as troublesome, in the heat of summer, and sit by the hot fire without our gloves? Cannot we sit at home without a horse or a coach, or set them by at our journey's end? Cannot we lie in bed without boots and spurs? Is it grievous to us to cease our physic when we are well. Even here, he is happier that hath least of the creature, and needeth least, than he that hath much and needeth much; because all creature commodites and helps have also their discommodities and troublesomeness; and the very applying and using so many remedies of our want is tedious of itself: and as God only needeth nothing, but is self-sufficient, and therefore only perfectly and essentially happy, so those are likest God that need least from without, and have the greatest plentitude of internal goodness. What need we to preach, hear, read, pray, to bring us to heaven, when we are there?

Sect. 7. And as for our friends, and our converse with them, as relations, or as wise, religious, and faithful to us, he that believeth not that there are far more, and far better, in heaven, than are on earth, doth not believe, as he ought, that there is a heaven. Our friends here are wise, but they are unwise also; they are faithful, but partly unfaithful; they are holy, but also, alas! too sinful; they have the image of God, but blotted and dishonored by their faults; they do God and his church much service, but they also do too much against him, and too much for Satan, even when they intend the honor of God; they promote the gospel, but they also hinder it: their weakness, ignorance, error, selfishness, pride, passion, division, contention, scandals, and remissness, do oft so much hurt, that it is hard to discern, whether it be not greater than their good to the church, or to their neighbors. Our friends are our helpers and comforters; but how oft also are they our hinderers, troubles, and grief? But in heaven they are altogether wise, and holy, and faithful, and concordant, and have nothing in them, nor there done by them, but what is amiable to God and man.

And, with our faithful friends, we have here a mixture, partly of useless and burdensome persons, and partly of unfaithful hypocrites, and partly of self-conceited factious wranglers, and partly of mali-

cious, envious underminers, and partly by implacable enemies ; and how many of all these, set together is there for one worthy, faithful friend ! And how great a number is there to trouble you, for one that will indeed comfort you ! But in heaven there are none but the wise and holy ; no hypocrites, no burdensome neighbors, no treacherous, or oppressing, or persecuting enemies are there. And is not all good and amiable better than a little good, with so troublesome a mixture of noisome evils ?

Christ loved his disciples, his kindred ; yea, and all mankind, and took pleasure in doing good to all, and so did his apostles ; but how poor a requital had he or they from any but from God ? Christ's own brethren believed not in him but wrangled with him, almost like those that said to him on the cross, " If thou be the Son of God, come down, and we will believe." Peter himself was once a Satan to him ; (Matt. xvi.) and after, with cursing and swearing, denied him : and all his disciples forsook him, and fled ; and what, then, could be expected from others ?

No friends have a perfect suitableness to each other ; and roughness and inequalities that are nearest us are most troublesome. The wonderful variety and contrariety of apprehensions, interest, educations, temperaments, and occasions, and temptations, &c., are such, that while we are scandalised, at the discord and confusions of the world, we must recall ourselves, and admire that all-ruling providence, which keepeth up so much order and concord as there is : we are, indeed, like people in crowded streets, who, going several ways, molest each other with their jostling oppositions ; or, like boys at football, striving to overthrow each other for the ball ; but it is a wonder of divine power and wisdom, that all the world are not continually in mortal war.

If I do men no harm, yet if I do but cross their wills, it goeth for a provoking injury ; and when there are as many wills as persons, who is it that can please them all ? Who hath money enough to please all the poor that need it, or the covetous that desire it ? Or, who can live with displeased men, and not feel some of the fruits of their displeasure ? What day goeth over my head, in which abundance desire not, or expect not, impossibilities from me ? And how


great is the number of them that expect unrighteous things ! By nothing do I displease so many, as by not displeasing God and my conscience ; and for nothing am I so deeply accused of sin as for not sinning. And the world will not think well of any thing that crosseth their opinion and carnal interest, be it never so conform to God's commands ; I must confess, that while I suffer from all sides, few men have more common and open praises from their persecutors, than I : but while they praise me in general, and for other particulars, they aggravate my non-conformity to their opinions and wills, and take me to be so much the more hurtful to them. The greatest crimes that have been charged on me, have been for the things which I thought to be my greatest duties ; and for those parts of my obedience, to my conscience and God, which cost me dearest ; and where I pleased my flesh least, I pleased the world least. At how cheap a rate to my flesh could I have got the applause of factious men, if that had been my end and business. Would I have conformed to their wills, and taken a bishopric, and the honors and riches of the world, how good a man had I been called by the diocesan party. And oh, what praise I should have with the papists, could I turn papist ; and all the backbiting and bitter censures of the antinomians, anabaptists, and separatists, had been turned into praise, could I have said as they, or not contradicted them. But otherwise there is no escaping their accusations ; and is this tumultuous, militant, yea, malignant world, a place that I should be loth to leave ?

Alas ! our darkness, and weakness, and passions are such, that it is hard for a family, or a few faithful friends, to live so evenly in the exercise of love, as not to have oft unpleasant jars. What, then, is to be expected from strangers, and from enemies ? Ten thousand persons will judge of abundance of my words and actions, who never knew the reason of them. Every one's conceptions are as the report and conveyance of the matter to them is ; and while they have a various light, and false reports, (and defectiveness will make them false,) what can be expected, but false injurious censures ?

Sect. 8. And though no outward thing on earth is more precious than the holy word, and worship, and ordinances of God, yet even here I see that which pointeth me up higher, and telleth me it is much

better to be with Christ. Shall I love the name of heaven better than heaven itself? The holy Scriptures are precious, because I have there the promise of glory ; but is not the possession better than the promise? If a light and guide thither through this wilderness be good, surely the end must needs be better. And it hath pleased God, that all things on earth, and therefore, even the sacred Scriptures should bear the marks of our state of imperfection : imperfect persons were the penmen ; and imperfect human language is the conveying, signal, organical part of the matter ; and the method and phrase (though true and blameless) are far short of the heavenly perfection. Else so many commentators had not found so hard a task of it to expound innumerable difficulties, and reconcile so many seeming contradictions ; nor would infidels find matter of so strong temptation, and so much cavil as they do ; nor would Peter have told us of the difficulties of Paul's epistles, and such occasions of men's wresting them to their own destruction. Heaven will not be made, to perfect spirits, the occasion of so many errors, and controversies, and quarrels, as the Scriptures are to us imperfect men on earth ; yea, heaven is the more desirable, because there I shall better understand the Scriptures, than here I can ever hope to do. All the hard passages, now misunderstood, will be there made plain, and all the seeming contradictions reconciled ; and, which is much more, that God, that Christ, that new Jerusalem, that glory, and that felicity of souls, which are now known but darkly and enigmatically in the glass, will then be known intuitively as we see the face itself whose image only the glass first showed us. To leave my bible, and go to the God and the heaven that is revealed, will be no otherwise a loss to me, than to lay by my crutches, or spectacles, when I need them not, or to leave his image for the presence of my friend.

Much less do I need to fear the loss of all other books, or sermons, or other verbal informations. Much reading hath oft been a weariness to my flesh ; and the pleasure of my mind is much abated by the great imperfection of the means. Many books must be partly read, that I may know that they are scarce worth the reading ; and many must be read, to enable us to satisfy other men's expectations, and to confute those who abuse the authority of the authors against



the truth: and many good books must be read, that have little to add to what we have read in many others before; and many that are blotted with ensnaring errors; which, if we detect not, we leave snares for such as see them not; and if we detect them, (never so tenderly, if truly,) we are taken to be injurious to the honor of the learned, godly authors, and proudly to overvalue our own conceits. And so lamentable is the case of all mankind, by the imperfections of human language, that those words which are invented for communication of conceptions, are so little fitted to their use, as rather to occasion misunderstanding and contentions; their being scarce a word that hath not many significations, and that needeth not many more words to bring us to the true notice of the speaker's mind; and when every word is a *signum*, that hath three relations, 1. To the matter spoken of. 2. To the mind of the speaker, as signifying his conceptions of that matter. 3. And to the mind of the hearer, or reader, which is to be informed by it, it is so hard to find and use words that are fitted indeed to all these uses, and to have store of such, and mix no other, that few, if any, in the world were ever so happy as to attain it. 1. And if words be not fitted to the matter or things, they are false as to their first and proper use; and yet the penury of apt words, and the redundancy of others, and the authority of the masters of sciences, imposing arbitrary terms and notions on their disciples, and the custom of the vulgar, who have the empire, as to the sense of words, have all conspired to make words inapt, and of very uncertain signification. So that when students have learned words by long and hard studies, they are oft little the nearer the true knowledge of the things; and too oft, by their inaptitude, misled to false conceptions. And so their saying is too often true, that a great book is a great evil, while it containeth so great a number of uncertain words, which become the matter of great contentions.

2. And when the mind of the speaker or writer is no better informed by such notions, but his conceptions of things are some false, some confused and undigested, what wonder if his words do no otherwise express his mind to others, when even men of clearest understanding find it difficult to have words still ready to communicate their conceptions with truth and clearness. To form true sentiments

of things into apt, significant words, is a matter of mere art, and requireth an apt teacher, and a serious learner, and long use (and too many take their art of speaking, in prayer, conference, or preaching, to have more in it of wisdom and piety, than it hath; and some too much condemn the unaccustomed that want it.)

3. And if we could fit our words well to the matter, and to our minds, (with that double verity,) yet still it is hard to fit them to the reader or hearer; for want of which they are lost as to him; and his information being our end, they are therefore so far lost to us. And that which is spoken most congruously to the matter, is seldom fitted to the capacity of the receiver. And *recipitur ad modum recipientis, et pro capto lectoris, &c.* Some readers or hearers, (yea, almost all,) are so used to unapt words and notions, obtruded on mankind, by the master of words, that they cannot understand us if we change their terms and offer them fitter, and yet least understand those which they think that they best understand; and all men must have long time to learn the art of words, before they can understand them as well as before they can readily use them. And the duller any man is, and of less understanding, the more words are necessary to make him understand; and yet his memory is the less capable of retaining many. This is our difficulty, not only in catechising, but in all other writings and teaching, a short catechism, or a short style, the ignorant understand not: and a long one they remember not. And he that will accommodate one judicious reader or hearer, with profound matter, or an accurate style, must incommode multitudes that are incapable of it; and, therefore, such must be content with few approvers, and leave the applause of the multitude to the more popular, unless he be one that can seasonably suit himself to both.

A man that resolveth not to be deceived by ambiguous words, and maketh it his first work, in all his readings and disputings, to difference between words, and sense, and things, and strictly to examine each disputed term, till the speaker's meaning be distinctly known, will see the lamentable case of the church, and all mankind, and what shadows of knowledge deceive the world, and in what useless dreams the greatest part of men, yea, of learned men, do spend their days: much of that which some men unweariedly study, and

take to be the honor of their understandings, and their lives; and much of that, which multitudes place their piety and hopes of salvation in, being a mere game at words, and useless notions; and as truly to be called vanity and vexation, as is the rest of the vain show, that most men walk in. My sad and bitter thoughts of the heathen, infidel, Mahometan world, and of the common corruptions of rulers and teachers, cities and countries, senates and councils, I will not here open to others, lest they offend; nor cry out as Seneca, *Omnes mali sumus*, or *Stultorum plena sunt omnia*, nor describe the furious spirits of the clergy, and their ignorance, and unrighteous calumnies and schisms, as Gregory Nazianzen and others do, nor voluminously lament the seeming hopeless case of earth, by the boldness, blindness, and fury of men that make use of such sad considerations, to loosen my love from such a world, and make me willing to be with Christ.

9. And if other men's words and writings are blemished with so much imperfection, why should I think that my own are blameless? I must for ever be thankful for the holy instructions and writings of others, notwithstanding human frailty, and contentious men's abuse of words: and so I must be thankful that God hath made any use of my own, for the good of souls, and his church's edification. But with how many allays are such comforts here mixed? We are not the teachers of a well-ruled school, where learners are ranked into several forms, that every one may have the teaching which is agreeable to his capacity; but we must set open the door to all that will crowd in, and publish our writings to all sorts of readers: and there being as various degrees of capacity as there are men and women, and consequently great variety and contrariety of apprehensions, it is easy *ab antecedente* to know what various reception we must expect: we cast out our doctrine almost as a foot-ball is turned out among boys in the street, in some congregations: few understand it, but every one censureth it. Few come as learners, or teachable disciples, but most come to sit as judges on their teacher's words; and yet have not either the skill, or the patience, or the diligence, which is necessary in a just trial, to a righteous judgment. But as our words agree or disagree with the former conceptions of every hearer,

so are they judged to be wise or foolish, sound or unsound, true or false, fit or unfit. Few sermons that I preach, but one extolleth them, and wisheth they were printed, and another accuseth them of some heinous fault : some men are pleased with clearness and accurateness of doctrine ; and others account it too high, and say we shoot over the hearers' heads, and like nothing but the fervent application of what they knew before : most hearers are displeased with that which they most need : if they err, they reproach that doctrine as erroneous that would cure them : if they are guilty of any prevailing distemper and sin, they take that application to be injurious to them, which would convince them, and save them from that guilt. Most are much pleased with plain and zealous reproof of sin ; but it must be other men's sins, and not their own. The poor love to hear of the evil of oppression and unmercifulness, of pride, fulness, and idleness, and all the sins of the rich : subjects love to hear of their ruler's faults, and say, O this man is no flatterer ; he dares tell the greatest of their sins : but if they hear of their own, they take it for an injury. Rulers like a sermon for submission and obedience, but how few love to hear of the evil of injustice and oppression, or pride and sensuality, or to read Luke xvi. or xii. or James v. ; to hear of the necessity of holiness, justice, and temperance, and of death, and judgment, and the life to come ! Every sectary and dogmatist delighteth to have his own opinion cried up, and his party praised as the chiefest saints : but all that tendeth to the praise of those he dissenteth from, and accounteth adversaries to the truth, is distasteful to him, as a complying with iniquity, and a strengthening of the enemies of Christ : and all that uncharitableness which he expecteth from us against others, is as much expected by others against him, and such as he.

This day, while I am writing these words, my pockets are full of letters sent to me, on one side importunately charging it on me as my duty to conform to the oaths, declarations, covenants, and practices, now imposed, or else to give over preaching (which would please them) ; and on the other side vehemently censuring me as guilty of greivouse sin, for declaring my judgment for so much of conformity as I have done ; and charging me by predictions as guilty of the suf-

ferings of all that are otherwise minded, for communicating in the sacrament, and the common prayers of the church; and others in the mid-way, persuading me equally to bear my testimony against unjust separation and persecution, and to endeavor still, if possible, to save a self-destroying people from the tearing fury of these two extremes. And how should I answer these contrary expectations, or escape the censures of such expectants?

And it hath pleased God, who thirty years and more had tried me by human applause, of late in this city (where multitudes of persons of contrary minds are, like passengers in crowded streets, still jostling and offending one another) to exercise me with men's daily backbitings and cavils: and so many have chosen me for the subject of their discourse, that I may say as Paul, (1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, &c.,) "We are made a spectacle (or theater) to the world, and to angels, and to men: we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ," &c. Did I not live out of the noise in retirement, taken up with pain, and expectations of my change, what an annoyance to me would it be to hear religious persons, that have a God, a Christ, a heaven, to talk of, to abuse their time and tongues in so much talking of one so inconsiderable, and that hath so little to do with them, or they with him; while with some overvaluing me, and others still quarreling, I am the matter of their idle, sinful talk. The persecutors, for divers years after, first silencing, (if not still,) and the separatists for two or three years last past, have been possessed with so strange a jealousy and quarrelsome a disposition against me, that they seem to take it for their interest to promote my defamation, and for much of their work to search what may afford them any matter of accusation in every sermon that I preach, and every book that I write. And though the fury of the persecutors be such as maketh them much incapable of such converse and sober consideration as is needful to their true information and satisfaction; yet most of the more religious cavillers are satisfied as soon as I have spoken with them, and all endeth in a *putarem* or *non putarem*: for want of accuracy and patience, they judge rashly before they understand, and when they understand, confess their error; and yet many go on and take no warning after many times conviction of their mistake. Even

in books that are still before their eyes (as well as in transient words and sermons) they heedlessly leave out, or put in, or alter and mis-report plain words, and, with confidence, affirm those things to have been said that never were said, but, perhaps, the contrary. And when all people will judge of the good or evil of our words, as they think we have reason to use them or forbear them, how can we satisfy men that are out of our hearing, and to whom we cannot tell our reasons? Most men are of private, narrow observation, and judge of the good or hurt that our words do by those that they themselves converse with: and when I convince them that my decisions, of many questions (which they are offended at) are true, they say, it is an unseasonable and a hurtful truth: and when I have called them to look further abroad in the world, and told them my reasons; they say, 'Had these been all set down, men would have been satisfied.' And on how hard terms do we instruct such persons, whose narrow understandings cannot know obvious reasons of what we say till they are particularly told them? And so to tell men the reasons of all that such can quarrel with, will make every book to swell with commentaries to such a bigness as they can neither buy nor read: and they come not to us to know our reasons; nor have we leisure to open them to every single person: and thus suspicious men, when their understandings want the humbling acquaintance with their ignorance, and their consciences that tenderness which should restrain them from rash judging, go on to accuse such needful truths of which they know not the use and reason. And what man living hath the leisure and opportunity to acquaint all the ignorant persons in city and country with all the reasons of all that he shall say, write, or do? Or who, that writeth not a page instead of a sentence, can so write that every unprepared reader shall understand him? and what hopes hath the tutor or schoolmaster of preserving his reputation, who shall be accounted erroneous, and accused of unsound or injurious doctrine, by every scholar that understandeth not his words, and all the reasons of them?

But God in great mercy to me hath made this my lot (not causing, but permitting, the sins of the contentious) that I might before death be better weaned from all below: had my temptations from inordi-

nate applause had no allay, they might have been more dangerously strong. Even yet while church-dividers, on both extremes, do make me the object of their daily obloquy, the continued respects of the sober and peaceable, are so great, as to be a temptation strong enough, to so weak a person, to give a check to my desires to leave the world. It is long since riches and worldly honor appeared to me as they are, as not rendering the world much lovely or desirable. But the love and concord of religious persons hath a more amiable aspect: there is so much holiness in these, that I was loth to call them vanity and vexation: but yet as flesh and blood would refer them to selfish ends, and any way value them as a carnal interest, I must so call them, and number them with the things that are loss and dung. (Phil. iii. 7, 8.) Selfishness can serve itself upon things good and holy: and if good men, and good books, and good sermons, would make the world seem over-lovely to us, it will be a mercy of God to abate the temptation: and if my soul, looking toward the heavenly Jerusalem, be hindered as Paul was in his journey to Jerusalem, (Acts xx. and xxi.,) by the love of ancient friends and hearers, I must say, 'What mean you to weep and break my heart! I am ready to leave the dearest friends on earth, and life and all the pleasures of life, for the presence of far better friends with Christ, and the sweeter pleasures of a better life.' That little amiableness which is in things below, is in godly men as life in the heart, which dieth last: when that is all gone, when we are dead to the love of the godly themselves, and to learning, books, and mediate ordinances, so far as they serve a selfish interest, and tempt down our hearts from heavenly aspirings, the world is then crucified to us, indeed, and we to it. I rejoice to tread in the footsteps of my Lord, who had some, indeed, weeping about his cross, but was forsaken by all his disciples, while in the hour of temptation they all fled! But my desertion is far less, for it is less than I am fit to bear. If God will justify, who shall condemn? If he be for me, who shall be against me? O may I not be put to that dreadful case, to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And may nothing separate me from his love! And then were I forsaken of the sober and peaceable, as I am, in part, of some quarrelsome dividers, how tolerable a trial would it be?

Man is as dust in the balance, that addeth little to it, and signifieth nothing when God is in the other end. But I suspect still that I make too much account of man, when this case hath taken up too much of my observation.

10. And of all things, surely a departing soul hath least cause to fear the losing of its notice of the affairs of the world; of peace, or wars, or church, or kingdoms! For, (1.) If the sun can send forth its material beams, and operate by motion, light, and heat, at such a distance as this earth, why should I think that blessed spirits are such local, confined, and impotent substances, as not to have notice of the things of earth? Had I but bodily eyes, I could see more from the top of a tower or hill, than any one that is below can do. And shall I know less of earth from heaven than I do now? It is unlike that my capacity will be so little, and if it were, it is unlike that Christ and all the angels will be so strange to me, as to give me no notice of things that so much concern my God and my Redeemer, (to whom I am united,) and the holy society of which I am a part, and myself as a member of Christ and that society! I do not think that the communion of the celestial inhabitants is so narrow and slow, as it is of walking clods of earth, and of souls that are confined to such dark lanterns as this body is. Stars can shine one to another, and we on earth can see them so far off in their heaven. And sure then if they have a seeing faculty each of them can see many of us; even the kingdoms of the world. Spirits are most active, and of powerful and quick communication. They need not send letters, or write books to one another, nor lift up a voice to make each other hear; nor is there any unkindness, division, or unsociable selfishness among them, which may cause them to conceal their notices or their joys; but as activity, so unity is greatest where there is most perfection; they will so be many, as yet to be one; and their knowledge will be one knowledge, and their love one love, and their joy one joy. Not by so perfect a unity as in God himself, who is one and but one; but such as is suitable to created imperfection, which participate of the perfection of the Creator, as the effect doth of the virtue of the cause, and therefore hath some participation of his unity. (O foolish soul! if I shall fear this unity with God, Christ, and all the holy

spirits, lest I should lose my present separate individuation, when perfection and union are so near a-kin.) In a word, I have no causé to think that my celestial advancement will be a diminution of any desirable knowledge, even of things on earth ; but contrarily, that it will be inconceivably increased.

(2.) But if indeed I shall know less of things below, it will be because that the knowledge of them is a part of vanity and vexation, which hath no place in heaven. So much knowledge of good and evil in lower matters, as came to us by sin, is unworthy of our fond tenaciousness, and fear of losing it. Surely the sad tidings which we have weekly in our news books, our lamentable notices of heathen and infidel kingdoms, of the overspreading prevalency of barbarousness, idolatry, ignorance, and infidelity ; of the rage and success of cruel tyrants ; of the bloody wars of proud, unquiet, worldly men ; of the misery of the oppressed, desolate countries, the dissipated churches, the persecuted, innocent Christians, are no such pleasing things as that we should be afraid to hear of such no more. To know or hear of the poor in famine, the rich in folly, the church distracted, the kingdom discontented, the godly scandalous by the effects of their errors, imperfections, and divisions ; the wicked outrageous, and waxing worse, the falseness, or miscarriages, or sufferings of friends, the fury or success of enemies. Is this an intelligence which I cannot spare ? What is the daily tidings that I hear, but of bloody wars, the undone countries, the persecuted churches, the silenced, banished, or imprisoned preachers ; of the best removed in judgment from an unworthy world by death, and worse succeeding in their rooms, of the renewed designs and endeavors of the church's enemies ; the implacable rage of the worldly and unquiet clergy, and the new divisions of self-conceited sectaries, and the obloquy and backbitings of each party against the other ? How oft hear I the sad tidings of this friend's sickness or death, and that friend's discontent, and of another's fall, and of many, very many's sufferings ? My ears are daily filled with the cries of the poor, whom I cannot relieve ; with the endless complaints of fearful, inelancholy, despairing persons ; with the wranglings of the ignorant and proud professors, and contentious divines, who censure most bodily where

they are most erroneous or dark ; or with the troublesome discontents of those that I converse with ; and should I be afraid of the ending of so sad a tagedy, or of awaking out of such an unpleasant dream ? Have I not many times thought of the privilege of the deaf, that hear not these troublesome and provoking things ; and of the blind that see not the vanities and temptations of this world. It is one part of the benefit of solitude, or a private life and habitation, to free me from many of these unpleasing objects ; and a great part of the benefit of sleep, that with my clothes I may lay by these troublesome thoughts.

Sect. 11. But other men tell me, the church cannot yet spare you ; there is yet this and that necessary work to be done ; there is this and that need, &c.

But, (1.) Is it we or God that must choose his servants, and cut out their work ? Whose work am I doing ? Is it my own or his ? If his, is it not he that must tell me what, and when, and how long ? And will not his will and choice be best ? If I believe not this, how do I take him for my God ? Doth God or I know better what he hath yet to do ? And who is fittest to do it ? The church's service and benefits must be measured out by our Master and Benefactor, and not by ourselves.

(2.) What am I to those more excellent persons whom, in all ages he hath taken out of the world ? And would men's thoughts of the church's needs detain them ? The poor heathen, infidel, Mahometan nations have no preachers of the Gospel. And if their need prove not that God will send them such, no country's need will prove that God will continue them such. Many more useful servants of Christ have died in their youth : John Janeway preached but one sermon ; Joseph Allen (and many other excellent men) died in the midst of his vigorous, successful labors ; both of them far more fit for God's work and likely to win souls, and glorify God, than I am, or ever was, however their greater light was partly kindled from my lesser. Yet did both these, under painful consuming languishings of the flesh, die as they had long lived, in the lively triumphant praises of their Redeemer, and joyful desires and hopes of glory. And shall I, at seventy-six years of age, after such a life of unspeakable mercies, and almost



fifty-three years of comfortable help in the service of my God, be now afraid of my reward, and shrink at the sentence of death, and still be desiring to stay here upon pretence of further service? We know not what is best for the church as God doth; the church and the world are not ours but his; not our desires, but his will must measure out its mercies. We are not so merciful as he is. It is not unmeet for us to desire many things which God will not give, nor seeth it meet to grant the particulars of such desires. Nothing ever lay so heavy on my heart, as the sin and misery of mankind, and to think how much the world lieth in folly and wickedness! And for what can I pray so heartily as for the world's recovery? and it is his will that I should show a holy and universal love by praying, "Let thy name be hallowed, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven:" and yet alas, how unlike is earth to heaven, and what ignorance, sin, confusions, and cruelties, here reign and prosper! And unless there be a wonderful change to be expected, even as by a general miracle, how little hope appeareth that ever these prayers should be granted in the things! It maketh us better to desire that others may be better; but God is the free disposer of his own gifts: and it seemeth to be his will, that the permitted ignorance and confusions of this world should help us the more to value and desire that world of light, love, and order, which he calleth us to prefer and hope for.

And if I am any way useful to the world, it is undeserved mercy that hath made me so, for which I must be thankful; but how long I shall be so, is not my business to determine, but my Lord's. My many sweet and beautiful flowers arise and appear in their beauty and sweetness, but for one summer's time, and they murmur not that they flourish for so short a space. The beasts, and birds, and fishes, which I feed on, do live till I will have them die; and as God will be served and pleased by wonderful variety at once of animals and vegetables, &c., so will he by many successive generations. If one flower fall or die, it sufficeth that others shall, summer after summer, arise from the same root: and if my pears, apples, plums, &c., fall or serve me when they are ripe, it sufficeth that not they, but others, the next year shall do the same; God will have other genera-

tions to succeed us. Let us thank him that we have had our time : and could we overcome the grand (too little observed) crime of *selfishness*, and could love others as ourselves, and God, as God, above all the world, it would comfort us at death, that others shall survive us, and the world shall continue, and God will be still God, and be glorified in his works : and love will say, I shall live in my successors, and I shall more than live in the life of the world, and yet most of all in the eternal life and glory of God.

And God, who made us not gods, but poor creatures, as it pleased him, doth know best our measures, and he will not try us with too long a life of temptations, lest we should grow too familiar where we should be strangers, and utterly strangers to our home. No wonder if that world was ready for a deluge, by a deluge of sin, in which men lived to six, seven, eight, and nine hundred years of age. Had our great sensualists any hope of so long a life, they would be more like incarnate devils, and there would be no dwelling near them for the holy seed. If angels were among them, they would, like the Sodomites, seek furiously to abuse them.

Nor will God tire us out with too long a life of earthly sufferings. We think short cares, and fears, and sorrows, persecutions, sickness, and crosses to be long, and shall we grudge at the wisdom and love which shorteneth them? Yea, though holy duty itself be excellent and sweet, yet the weakness of the flesh maketh us liable to weariness, and abateth the willingness of the spirit, and our wise and merciful God will not make our warfare, or our race, too long, lest we be wearied and faint, and fall short of the prize. By our weariness, and complaints, and fears, and groans, one would think that we thought this life too long, and yet when we should yield to the call of God, we draw back as if we would have it everlasting.

Sect. 12. Willingly submit, then, O my soul. It is not thou, but this flesh, that must be dissolved ; this troublesome, vile, and corruptible flesh. It is but the other half of thy meat and drink, which thy presence kept longer uncorrupted, going after the excremental part. Thou diest not when man (the *compositum*) dieth, by thy departure. And as thou livest not to thyself, thou diest not to thyself ; whether I live or die, I am the Lord's ; he that set up the candle,

knoweth how long he hath use for the light of it. Study thy duty, and work while it is day, and let God choose thy time, and willingly stand to his disposal. The gospel dieth not when I die. The church dieth not. The praises of God die not. The world dieth not, and perhaps it shall grow better, and those prayers shall be answered which seemed lost. Yea, and it may be some of the seed that I have sown, shall spring up to some benefit of the dark unpeaceable world when I am dead. And is not this much of the end of life? And is not that life good which attaineth its end? If my end was to do good and glorify God, if good be done, and God glorified when I am dead, yea, though I were annihilated, is not my end attained? Feign not thyself to be God, whose interest (that is, the pleasing of his will) is the end of all things, and whose will is the measure of all created good. Feign not thyself to be all the world: God hath not lost his work; the world is not dissolved when I am dissolved. Oh, how strong and unreasonable a disease is this inordinate *selfishness*! Is not God's will infinitely better than mine, and fitter to be fulfilled! Choose the fulfilling of his will, and thou shalt always have thy choice. If a man be well that can always have his will, let this always be thy will, that God's will may be done, and thou shalt always have it.

Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; even in thy peace, which passeth understanding, and which Christ, the prince of peace, doth give, and nothing in the world can take away. Oh, give me that peace which beseemeth a soul, which is so near the harbor, even the world of endless peace and love, where perfect union (such as I am capable of) will free me from all the sins and troubles which are caused by the convulsions, divulsions, and confusions of this divided, selfish world. Call home this soul by the encouraging voice of love, that it may joyfully hear, and say, 'It is my Father's voice.' Invite it to thee by the heavenly messenger. Attract it by the tokens and the foretastes of love. The messengers that invited me to the feast of grace, compelled me to come in without constraint. Thy effectual call did make me willing, and is not glory better than preparing grace? Shall I not come more willingly to the celestial feast? What was thy grace for, but to make me willing of glory, and

the way to it? Why didst thou dart down thy beams of love, but to make me love thee, and to call me up to the everlasting center? Was not the feast of grace as a sacrament of the feast of glory? Did I not take it in remembrance of my Lord until he come? Did not he that told me, "All things are ready," tell me also that "he is gone to prepare a place for us?" and it is his will that we shall be with him, and see his glory. They that are given him, and drawn to him by the Father on earth, do come to Christ. Give, now, and draw my departing soul to my glorified Head; and, as I have glorified thee on earth, in the measure that thy grace hath prevailed in me, pardon the sins by which I have offended thee, and glorify me in the beholding and participation of the glory of my Redeemer. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, with fuller life, and light, and love, into this too dead, and dark, and disaffected soul, that it may come with joyful willingness unto thee.

Sect. 13. Willingly depart, O lingering soul! It is from a Sodom, though in it there be righteous Lots, who yet are not without their woful blemishes! Hast thou so oft groaned for the general blindness and wickedness of the world, and art thou loth to leave it for a better? How oft wouldest thou have rejoiced to have seen but the dawning of a day of universal peace and reformation? And wouldest thou not see it where it shineth forth in fullest glory? Would a light at midnight have pleased thee so well? Hast thou prayed and labored for it so hard? And wouldest thou not see the sun? Will the things of heaven please thee no where but on earth, where they come in the least and weakest influences, and are terminated in gross, terrene, obscure, and unkind recipients? Away, away, the vindictive flames are ready to consume this sinful world! Sinners that blindly rage in sin must quickly rage in the effects of sin and of God's justice. The pangs of lust prepared for these pangs! They are treasuring up wrath against this day. Look not, then, behind thee. Away from this unhappy world! Press on unto the mark. (Phil. iii.) "Looking towards, and hastening to the coming of the day of God." (2 Pet. iii. 10—12.)

As this world hath used thee, it would use thee still, and it will use others. If thou hast sped well in it, no thanks to it, but unto

God. If thou hast had manifold deliverances, and marvellous preservations, and hast been fed with angel's food, love not this wilderness for it, but God and his angel, which was thy guide, protector, and deliverer.

And hath this troublesome flesh been so comfortable a companion to thee, that thou shouldest be so loth to leave it? Have thy pains, thy weariness, thy languishings, thy labors, thy cares and fears about this body, been pleasing to thee? And art thou loth that they should have an end? Didst thou not find a need of patience to undergo them? And of greater patience than mere nature gave thee? And canst thou hope now for better when nature faileth, and that an aged, consumed, more diseased body, should be a pleasanter habitation to thee than it was heretofore? If from thy youth up it hath been both a tempting and a troublesome thing to thee, surely, though it be less tempting, it will not be less troubling, when it is falling to the dust, and above ground savoreth of the grave! Had things sensible been never so pleasant in thy youth, and hadst thou glutted thyself in health with that sort of delight, in age thou art to say by nature, "I have no pleasure in them." Doth God in great mercy make pain and feebleness the harbingers of death, and wilt thou not understand their business? Doth he mercifully, beforehand, take away the pleasure of all fleshly things, and worldly vanities, that there may be nothing to relieve a departing soul, (as the shell breaketh when the bird is hatched, and the womb relaxed when the infant must be born,) and yet shall we stay when nothing holdeth us, and still be loth to come away? Wouldest thou dwell with thy beloved body in the grave, where it will rot and stink in loathsome darkness? If not, why should it now, in its painful languor, seem to thee a more pleasant habitation than the glorious presence of thy Lord? In the grave it will be at rest, and not tormented as now it is, nor wish at night, oh, that it were morning! nor say at morning, when will it be night? And is this a dwelling fit for thy delight? Patience in it, while God will so try thee, is thy duty, but is such patience a better and sweeter life than rest and joy?

Sect. 14. But, alas! how deaf is flesh to reason. Faith hath the reason which easily may shame all contrary reasoning, but sense

is unreasonable, and especially this inordinate, tenacious love of present life. I have reason enough to be willing to depart, even much more willing than I am. Oh, that I could be as willing as I am convinced that I have reason to be? Could I love God as much as I know that I should love him, then I should desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as much as I know that I should desire it. But God, in nature, hath there laid upon me some necessity of aversation, (though the inordinateness came from sin,) else Christ had not so feared, and deprecated the cup. Death must be a penalty, even where it is a gain, and therefore it must meet with some unwillingness: because we willingly sinned, we must unwillingly suffer. The gain is not the pain or dissolution in itself, but the happy consequents of it. All the faith and reason in the world will not make death to be no penalty, and therefore will not take away all unwillingness. No man ever yet reasoned or believed himself into a love of pain and death, as such, but seeing that the gain is unspeakably greater than the pain and loss, faith and holy reason may make our willingness to be greater than our unwillingness, and our hope and joy than our fear and sorrow. And it is the deep and effectual notice of goodness, which is God's way, in nature and grace, to change and draw the will of man. Come then, my soul, and think believingly, what is best for thee. And wilt thou not love and desire most that which is certainly the best?

TO DEPART AND TO BE WITH CHRIST IS FAR BETTER, OR RATHER TO BE CHOSEN.

Sect. 1. To say and hear that it is far better to be with Christ, is not enough to make us willing. Words and notions are such instruments as God useth to work on the souls, but the convincing, satisfying, powerful light, and the inclining love, are other things. The soul now operateth *ut forma hominis*, on and with the corporeal spirits and organs, and it perceiveth now its own perceptions, but it is a stranger to the mode of its future action, when separated from the body, and can have no formal conception of such conceptions as yet it never had. And therefore, its thoughts of its future state must be analogical and general, and partly strange. But general notices,

when certain, may be very powerful, and satisfy us in so much as is needful to our consent, and to such a measure of joy as is suitable to this earthly state. And such notices we have from the nature of the soul, with the nature of God, the course of Providence, and government of mankind, the internal and external conflicts which we perceive about men's souls, the testimony and promises of the word of God, the testimony of conscience, with the witness of the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, and in it the earnest and the foretaste of glory, and the beginnings of life eternal here, all which I have before considered.

Sect. 2. The Socinians, who would interpret this of the state of resurrection only, against plain evidence, violate the text: seeing Paul expressly speaketh of his gain by death, which will be his abode with Christ, and this upon his departure hence: which (in 2 Cor. v. 7, 8.) he calleth, his being absent from the body, and present with the Lord: and Christ, to the penitent thief, calleth his being with him in Paradise: and (Luke xvi.) in the parable of the steward, Christ intimateth to us, that wise preparers, when they go hence, are received into the everlasting habitations; as he there further tells us Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom.

Sect. 3. Goodness is *primaria et mensurans, vel secundaria et mensurata*: the first is God's perfect essence and will: the second is either properly and simply good, or analogical. The former is the creature's conformity to the will of God, or its pleasingness to his will: the latter is, 1. The greater, which is the welfare or perfection of the universe. 2. The lesser, which is the several parts of the universe, either, 1. In the nobler respect, as they are parts contributing to the perfection of the whole; or, 2. In the lower respect, as they are perfect or happy in themselves, or, 3. In the lowest respect of all, as they are good to their fellow-creatures which are below themselves.

Sect. 4. Accordingly, it is far better to be with Christ, I. Properly and simply, as it is the fulfilling of God's will. II. Analogically, as it tendeth to the perfection of the universe and the church. III. And as it will be our own good or felicity. IV. And as it will be good to our inferior fellow-creatures; though this last be most

questionable, and seemeth not included in the meaning of this text. Somewhat of these in order.

Sect. 5. I. It is an odious effect of idolatrous selfishness, to acknowledge no goodness above our own felicity, and accordingly, to make the goodness of God to be but formally his usefulness, benevolence, and beneficence, to his creatures, which is by making the creature the ultimate end, and God but the means; to make the creature to be God, and deny God, indeed, while we honor his name: as also it is to acknowledge no higher goodness formally in the creature, than in its own felicity as such: as if neither the pleasing of God's will, nor the perfection of the church and world, were better than we are: we are not of ourselves, and therefore we are not chiefly for ourselves; and, therefore, we have a higher good to love.

That is simply best which God willeth. Therefore, to live here is best whilst I do live here; and to depart is best when the time of my departure cometh: that is best which is, for it is the work of God: the world cannot be better at this instant than it is, nor any thing better, which is of God, because it is as he willeth it to be: but when God hath changed them, it will then be best that they are changed. Were there no other good in my departure hence, but this simple good, the fulfilling of God's will, my reason telleth me that I should be fully satisfied in it: but there is also a subordinate sort of good.

Sect. 6. II. For my change will tend to the perfection of the universe; even that material good or perfection, which is its aptitude for the use to which God hath created, and doth preserve it: as all the parts, the modes, the situation, the motions, of a clock, a watch, or other engine, do to the ends of the artificer. Though God hath not told me particularly, why every thing, and mode, and motion, is as it is, I know it is all done in perfect wisdom, and suited to its proper use and end: if the hen or bird knoweth how to make her nest, to lay her eggs secretly together, when and how to sit on them till they are hatched, and how to feed them and preserve them, and when to forsake them, as sufficient for themselves without her help, &c. If the bee knoweth when, and whence, and how, to gather her honey and wax, and how to form the repository combs, and how to lay it up,

and all the rest of her marvellous economy, shall I think that God doth he knoweth not what, or what is not absolutely the best? Doth he want either skill, or will, or power?

And should the stone grudge to be hewed, the brick to be burnt, the trees to be cut down, and sawed and framed, the lead and iron to be melted, &c., when it is but to form an useful edifice, and to adapt and compose every part to the perfecting of the whole?

Shall the waters grudge that they must glide away, and the plants that they must die, and half die every winter, and the fruits and flowers that they must fall, or the moon that it must have its changing motions, or the sun that it must rise and set so oft, &c., when all is but the action and order which maketh up that harmony and perfection which was designed by the Creator, and is pleasing to his will?

Sect. 7. III. But lawful self-love is yet further herein gratified: the goodness expressed in the text is that analogical, subordinate good, which is *mihi bonum*, my own felicity, and that which tendeth thereunto: it is most reasonable to love God best, and that next which is likest him (if known), and why should it not be the easiest and the sweetest? But experience findeth it so easy to love ourselves, that certainly, if I firmly believe that it is best for me, I shall desire to depart, and to be with Christ. And have I not reason to believe it?

Sect. 8. The reasons of it I will consider in this order: *I.* The general reason from the efficient and the means. *II.* The final reasons. *III.* The constitutive reasons from the state of my intellect, and its action and fruition there. *IV.* The constitutive reasons from the state of my will. *V.* The constitutive reasons from my practice there, leaving out those which the resurrection will give me, because I am speaking but of my present departure unto Christ.

I. The general reasons, &c.

Sect. 9. And, *I.* That is best for me, which love itself, my heavenly Father designed, and chooseth, for my good. I hope I shall never dare to think, or say, that he is mistaken, or that he wanted skill or love, or that I could have chosen better for myself than he doth, if he had left all to my choice. Many a time the wise and

good will of God hath crossed my foolish, rebellious will on earth ; and afterwards I have still perceived that it was best ; usually for myself, but always for a higher good than mine. It is not an enemy, nor a tyrant, that made me, that hath preserved me, and that calls me hence. He hath not used me as an enemy : the more I tried him, the better I have found him : had I better obeyed his ruling will, how happy had I been ! And is not his disposing and rewarding will as good ? Man's work is like man, and evil corrupteth it ; but God's work is like God, and uncorrupted : if I should not die till my dearest friend would have it, much more till I myself would choose it, (not constrained by misery,) I should rejoice, and think my life were safe ! O foolish, sinful soul ! if I take it not to be far better to be at God's choice, than at my own, or any man's ! and if I had not rather that he choose the time than I.

Be of good cheer, then, O my soul ! it is thy Father's voice that calleth thee hence : his voice that called thee into the world, and bid thee live ; that called thee out of a state of sin and death, and bid thee live hereafter unto him ; that called thee so oft from the grave, and, forgiving thy sins, renewed thy strength, restored thee to the comforts of his house and service ; and that so graciously led thee through this howling wilderness, and brought thee almost to the sight of the promised land. And wilt thou not willingly go, when infinite, fatherly love doth call thee ? art thou not desirous of his presence ? art thou afraid to go to him who is the only cure of thy fears ? What was it but this glory to which he did finally elect thee ? Where dost thou read that he elected thee to the riches and honors of this world, or to the pleasures of the flesh ? But he elected us in Christ to the heavenly inheritance. (Eph. i. 3, 4, &c.) Indeed, he elected thee also to bear the cross, and to manifold sufferings here : but is it that which thou preferrest before the crown ? That was but as a means unto the kingdom, that thou mightest be conformed to Christ, and reign with him when thou hast suffered with him. If God choose thee to blessedness, refuse it not thyself, nor behave thyself like a refuser.

Sect. 10. 2. And surely that state is my best which my Savior purchased and promised me as best : as he bought me not with silver and gold, so neither to silver and gold : did he live and die to make

me rich or advanced in the world? Surely his incarnation, merits, sacrifice, and intercession, had a low design, if that were all! And who hath more of these than they that have least of Christ? But he purchaseth us to an incorruptible crown; to an inheritance undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, that are kept, by God's power through faith unto salvation. (1 Pet. i.) And is it heaven that cost so dear a price for me, and is the end of so wonderful a design of grace, and shall I be unwilling now to receive the gift?

Sect. 11. 3. That sure is best for me, for which God's holy Spirit is preparing me; that for which he is given to believers; and that which is the end of all his holy operations on my soul. But it is not to love this world, that he is persuading me from day to day; but to come off from such love, and to set my heart on the things above. Is it to love this life and fleshly interest, this vanity and vexation, or rather to love the invisible perfection, that this blessed Spirit hath done so much to work my heart? And would I now undo all, or cross and frustrate all his operations? Hath grace been so long preparing me for glory, and shall I be loth to take possession of it? If I am not willing, I am not yet sufficiently prepared.

Sect. 12. 4. If heaven be not better for me than earth, God's word and ordinances have been all in vain? Surely that is my best which is the gift of the better covenant, and which is secured to me by so many sealed promises, and which I am directed to by so many sacred precepts, doctrines, and examples; and for which I have been called to hear, and read, and meditate, and pray, and watch so long. Was it the interest of the flesh on earth, or a longer life of worldly prosperity, which the gospel covenant secured to me; which the sacraments and Spirit sealed to me; which the bible was written to direct me to; which ministers preached to me; which my books were written for; which I prayed for; and for which I served God? Or was it not for his grace on earth, and glory in heaven? And is it not better for me to have the end of all these means, than lose them all, and lose my hopes? Why have I used them, if I would not attain their end.

Sect. 13. 5. That is my best state, which all the course of God's fatherly providences tend to : all his sweeter mercies, and all his sharper corrections, are to make me partaker of his holiness, and to lead me to glory in the way that my Savior and all his saints have gone before me : all things work together for the best to me, by preparing me for that which is best, indeed. Both calms and storms are to bring me to this harbor : if I take them but for themselves, and this present life, I mistake them, and understand them not, but unthankfully vilify them, and lose their end, and life, and sweetness : every word and work of God ; every day's mercy's, and changes, and usages, do look at heaven, and intend eternity. God leadeth me no other way : if I follow him not, I forsake my hope in forsaking him : if I follow him, shall I be unwilling to be at home, and come to the end of all this way ?

Sect. 14. 6. Surely that is best for me which God hath required me principally to value, love, and seek, and that as the business of all my life, referring all things else thereto : that this is my duty, I am fully certain, as is proved elsewhere, and before. Is my business in the world only for the things of this world ? How vain a creature, then, were man ; and how little were the difference between waking and sleeping ! Life and death : no wonder if he that believeth that there is no life but this to seek or hope for do live in uncomfortable despair, and only seek to palliate his misery with the brutish pleasures of a wicked life, and if he stick at no villany which his fleshly lusts incline him to ; especially tyrants and multitudes who have none but God to fear. It is my certain duty to seek heaven with all the fervor of my soul, and diligence of my life ; and is it not best to find it !

Sect. 15. 7. That must needs be best for me, which all other things must be forsaken for : it is folly to forsake the better for the worse : but Scripture, reason, and conscience, tell me, that all this world, when it stands in competition, or opposition, should be forsaken for heaven ; yea, for the least hopes of it : a possible, everlasting glory should be preferred before a certainly perishing vanity. I am sure this life will shortly be nothing to me ; and therefore it is next to nothing now. And must I forsake all for my everlasting hopes, and yet be unwilling to pass unto the possession of them.

Sect. 16. 8. That is like to be our best which is our maturest state. Nature carrieth all things towards their perfection: our apples, pears, grapes, and every fruit, are best when they are ripe; and though they then hasten to corruption, that is, through the incapacity of the corporal materials, any longer to retain the vegetative spirit, which is not annihilated at its separation; and being not made for its own felicity, but for man's, its ripeness is the state in which man useth it, before it doth corrupt of itself, and that its corruption may be for his nutriment; and the spirits and best matter of his said food doth become his very substance. And doth God cause saints to grow up unto ripeness, only to perish and drop down unto useless rottenness? It is not credible. Though our bodies become but like our filthiest excrements, our souls return to God that gave them: and though he need them not, he useth them in their separated state; and that to such heavenly uses as the heavenly maturity and mellowness hath disposed them to. Seeing, then, love hath ripened me for itself, shall I not willingly drop into its hand?

Sect 17. 9. That is like to be the best which the wisest and holiest, in all ages of the world, have preferred before all, and have most desired: and which also almost all mankind do acknowledge to be best at last. It is not like that all the best men in the world should be most deceived, and be put upon fruitless labors and sufferings by this deceit, and be undone by their duty; and that God should, by such deceits, rule all (or almost all) mankind: and also that the common notices of human nature, and conscience's last and closet documents, should be all in vain. But it is past all doubt, that no men usually are worse than those that have no belief or hopes of any life but this: and that none are so holy, just, and sober, so charitable to others, and so useful to mankind, as those that firmliest believe and hope for the state of immortality: and shall I fear that state which all that were wise and holy, in all ages, have preferred and desired?

Sect. 18. 10. And it is not unlike that my best state is that which my greatest enemies are most against: and how much Satan doth to keep me and other men from heaven; and how much worldly honor, and pleasure, and wealth, he could afford us to accomplish it, I need not here again be copious in reciting, having said so much of

it in the 'Treatise of infidelity.' And shall I be, towards myself, so much of Satan's mind? He would not have me come to heaven: and shall I also be unwilling? All these things tell me that it is best to be with Christ.

II. The Final Reasons.

Sect. 1. II. 1. Is it not far better to dwell with God in glory, than with sinful men, in such a world as this? Though he be every where, his glory, which we must behold to our felicity, and the perfecting operations and communications of his love are in the glorious world, and not on earth. As the eye is made to see the light, and then to see other things by the light, so is man's mind made to see God, and to love him; and other things, as in, by, and for him. He that is our beginning is our end; and our end is the first motive of all moral action, and for it, it is all that means are used: and the end attained is the rest of souls. How oft hath my soul groaned under the sense of distance, and darkness, and estrangedness from God? How oft hath it looked up, and gapsed after him, and said, 'Oh! when shall I be nearer and better acquainted with my God?' "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Psalm xlii. 1.) And would I not have my prayers heard, and my desires granted? What else is the sum of lawful prayers, but God himself? If I desire any thing more than God, what sinfulness is in those desires, and how sad is their signification. How oft have I said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee? It is good for me to draw near to God." (Psalm lxxiii. 25, 28.) Wo to me, if I did dissemble! If not, why should my soul draw back? Is it because that death stands in the way? Do not my fellow-creatures die for my daily food; and is not my passage secured by the love of my Father, and the resurrection and intercession of my Lord? Can I see the light of heavenly glory in this darksome shell and womb of flesh?

Sect. 2. All creatures are more or less excellent and glorious, as God is more or less operative and refulgent in them, and, by that operation, communicateth most of himself unto them. Though he

be immense and indivisible, his operations and communications are not equal : and that is said to be nearest to him which hath most of those operations on it ; and that without the intervenient casualty of any second, created cause ; and so all those are in their order near unto him, as they have noblest natures, and fewest intervenient causes. Far am I from presuming to think that I am, or shall be, the best and noblest of God's creatures, and so that I shall be so near him as to be under the influx of no second or created causes, of which more anon. But to be as near as my nature was ordained to approach, is but to attain the end and perfection of my nature. ,

Sect. 3. And as I must not look to be the nearest to him, as he is the first efficient, no more must I, as he is the first dirigent, or governing cause. As now I am under the government of his officers on earth, I look for ever to be under sub-governors in heaven. My glorified Savior must be my Lord and ruler, and who else under him I know not. If angels are not equal in perfection, nor, as is commonly supposed equal in power, nor without some regimental order among themselves, I must not conclude that no created angel or spirit shall have any government over me, but it will be so pure and divine, as that the blessed effects of God's own government will be sweetly powerful therein. If the law was given by angels, and the angel of God was in the burning bush, and the angel conducted the people through the wilderness, and yet all these things are ascribed to God, much more near and glorious will the divine regiment there be, who ever are the administrators.

Sect. 4. And as I must expect to be under some created, efficient and dirigent causes there, so must I expect to have some subordinate ends : else there would not be a proportion and harmony in casualities. Whatever nobler creatures are above me, and have their casualities upon me, I must look to be finally for these nobler creatures. When I look up and think what a world of glorious beings are now over me, I dare not presume to think that I shall finally, any more than receptively, be the nearest unto God, and that I am made for none but him. I find here that I am made, and ruled, and sanctified, for the public or common good of many as above my own, of which I am past doubt ; and I am sure that I must be, finally, for

my glorified Redeemer; and for what other spiritual beings, or intelligences, that are above me, little do I know: and God hath so ordered all his creatures, as that they are mutually ends and means for and to one another, though not in an equality, nor in the same respects. But whatever nearer ends there will be, I am sure that he who is the first efficient, and dirigent, will be the ultimate, final cause: and I shall be, in this respect, as near him as is due to the rank and order of my nature. I shall be useful to the ends which are answerable to my perfection.

Sect. 5. And if it be the honor of a servant to have an honorable master, and to be appointed to the most honorable work; if it be some honor to a horse above swine, or a worm, or fly, that he serveth more nearly for the use of man, yea, for a prince, will it not be also my advancement to be ultimately for God, and subordinately for the highest created natures, and this in such services as are suitable to my spiritual and heavenly state?

Sect. 6. For I am far from thinking that I shall be above service, and have none to do, for activity will be my perfection and my rest: and all such activity must be regular in harmony, and order of causes, and for its proper use; and what, though I know not now fully what service it is that I must do, I know it will be good and suitable to the blessed state which I shall be in; and it is enough that God and my Redeemer know it; and that I shall know it in due time, when I come to practise it; of which more afterward.

Sect. 7. The inordinate love of this body and present composition seduceth souls to think that all their use and work is for its maintenance and prosperity, and when the soul hath done that, and is separated from flesh, it hath nothing to do, but must lie idle, or be as nothing, or have no considerable work or pleasure. As if there were nothing in the whole world, but this little fluid mass of matter, for a soul to work upon; as if itself, and all the creatures, and God, were nothing, or no fit objects for a soul: and why not hereafter, as well as now: or, as if that which, in our compounded state, doth operate on and by its organs, had no other way of operation without them; as if the musician lost all his power, or were dead, when his instrument is out of tune, or broken, and could do nothing else but

play on that : as if the fiery part of the candle were annihilated, or transmutate, as some philosophers imagine, when the candle goeth out, and were not fire, and in action still : or as if that sunbeam which I shut out, or which passeth from our horizon, were annihilated, or did nothing, when it shineth not with us. Had it no other individual to illuminate, or to terminate its beams or action, were it nothing to illuminate the common air ? Though I shall not always have a body to operate in and upon, I shall always have God, and a Savior, and a world of fellow-creatures ; and when I shine not in this lantern, and see not by these spectacles, nor imaginarily in a glass, I shall yet see things suitable intuitively, and as face to face. That which is essentially life, as a living principle, will live ; and that which is essentially an active, intellective, volitive principle, force, and virtue, will still be such while it is itself, and is not annihilated, or changed into another thing (which is not to be feared) ; and that which is such can never want an object till all things be annihilated.

Sect. 8. Reason assureth me, that were my will now what it should be, and fully obsequious herein to my understanding, to fulfil God's will would be the fulfilling of my own will, for my will should perfectly comply with his, and to please him perfectly would be my perfect pleasure : and it is the unreasonable adhesion to this body, and sinful selfishness, which maketh any one think otherwise now. I am sure that my soul shall live, for it is life itself ; and I am sure that I shall live to God, and that I shall fulfil and please his blessed will : and this is, as such, incomparably better than my felicity, as such : and yet so far as I am pleased in so doing, it will be my felicity.

Sect. 9. I begin now to think, that the strange love which the soul hath to this body (so far as it is not inordinate) is put into us of God, partly to signify to us the great love which Christ hath to his mystical, political body, and to every member of it, even the least : he will gather all his elect out of the world, and none that come to him shall be shut out, and none that are given him shall be lost : as his flesh is to them meat indeed, and his blood is to them drink indeed, and he nourisheth them for life eternal : (his Spirit in them, turning the sacrament, the word, and Christ himself, *in esse objectivo*, as believ-

ed in, into spirit and life to us, as the soul and our natural spirits turn our food into flesh, and blood, and spirits, which, in a dead body, or any lifeless repository, it would never be :) so as we delight in the ease and prosperity of our body, and each member, and have pleasure in the pleasant food that nourisheth it, and other pleasant objects which accommodate it; Christ also delighteth in the welfare of his church, and of all the faithful, and is pleased when they are fed with good and pleasant food, and when hereby they prosper: Christ loveth the church, not only as a man must love his wife, but as we love our bodies; and no man ever hated his own flesh. (Eph. v. 27, &c.) And herein I must allow my Savior the pre-eminence, to overgo me in powerful, faithful love: he will save me better from pain and death than I can save my body: and will more inseparably hold me to himself. If it please my soul to dwell in such a house of clay, and to operate on so mean a thing as flesh, how greatly will it, please my glorified Lord, to dwell with his glorified body, the triumphant church, and to cherish and bless each member of it! It would be a kind of death to Christ to be separated from his body, and to have it die. Whether Augustine, and the rest of the fathers, were in the right or no, who thought, that as our bodies do not only shed their hairs, but, by sickness and waste, lose much of their very flesh; so Christ's militant body doth not only lose hypocrites, but also some living, justified members; yet, certain it is, that confirmed members, and most certain, that glorified members, shall not be lost: heaven is not a place for Christ or us to suffer such loss in. And will Christ love me better than I love my body? Will he be more loth to lose me than I am to lose a member, or to die? Will he not take incomparably greater pleasure in animating and actuating me for ever, than my soul doth in animating and actuating this body? O, then, let me long to be with him! And though I am naturally loth to be absent from the body, let me be by his Spirit more unwilling to be absent from the Lord; and though I would not be unclothed, had not sin made it necessary, let me not groan to be clothed upon with my heavenly habitation, and to become the delight of my Redeemer, and to be perfectly loved, by love itself.

Sect. 10. And even this blessed receptivity of my soul, in terminating the love and delight of my glorified Head, must needs be a felicity to me. The insensible creatures are but beautified by the sun's communication of its light and heat; but the sensitives have also the pleasure of it. Shall my soul be senseless? Will it be a clod or stone? Shall that, which is now the form of man, be then more lifeless, senseless, or incapable, than the form of brutes is now? Doubtless, it will be a living, perceiving, sensible recipient of the felicitating love of God, and my Redeemer; I shall be loved as a living spirit, and not as a dead and senseless thing, that doth not comfortably perceive it.

Sect. 11. And if I must rejoice with my fellow-servants that rejoice, shall I not be glad to think that my blessed Lord will rejoice in me, and in all his glorified ones? Union will make his pleasure to be much mine; and it will be aptly said by him to the faithful soul, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matt. xxv. 21.) His own active joy will objectively be ours, as ours will be efficiently his, or from him. Can that be an ill condition to me, in which my Lord will most rejoice? it is best to him, and, therefore, best to me.

Sect. 12. And the heavenly society will joyfully welcome a holy soul. If there be now "Joy in heaven among the angels, for one sinner that repenteth," (Luke xv. 10,) who hath yet so little holiness, and so much sin; what joy will there be over a perfected, glorified soul? Surely, if our angels there behold our Father's face, they will be glad, in season, of our company. The angels that carried Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, no doubt rejoiced in their work, and their success. And is the joy of angels, and the heavenly host, as nothing to me? Will not love and union make their joy to be my own; if love here must make all my friends and neighbors comforts to become my own? And as their joy, according to their perfection, is greater than any that I am now capable of, so the participation of so great a joy of theirs will be far better than to have my little separated apartment. Surely, that will be my best condition, which angels and blessed spirits will be best pleased in, and I shall rejoice most in that which they most rejoice in.

III. *The constitutive Reasons from the intellectual State.*

III. Sect. 1. Though the temper would persuade men, because of the case of infants in the womb, apoplectics, &c., that the understanding will be but an unactive power, when separated from these corporeal organs, I have seen before sufficient reasons to repel this temptation. I will suppose, that it will not have such a mode of conception, as it hath now by these organs ; but, 1. The soul will be still essentially a vital, intellectual substance, disposed to act naturally ; and that is to those acts which it is formally inclined to, as fire to illuminate and heat. And as it cannot die, (while it is what it is in essence,) because it is life itself, that is, the vital substance ; so it cannot but be intellectual, (as to an inclined power,) because it is such essentially ; though God can change, or annihilate any thing, if he would. 2. And it will be among a world of objects. 3. And it will still have its dependence on the first cause, and receive his continual, actuating influx. 4. And no man can give the least show of true reason, to prove that it shall cease sensation, (whether the sensitive faculties be in the same substance which is intellectual, which is most probable, or in one conjunct, as some imagine,) though the species and modes of sensation cease, which are denominated from the various organs.

5. Yea, no man can prove that the departing soul doth not carry with it its igneous spirits, which, in the body, it did immediately actuate. If it were ever so certain that those Greek fathers were mistaken (as well as hypocrites,) who took the soul itself to be a sublime, intellectual fire.

And as to the objection some hold, that the soul pre-existed before it was in the body ; others, and most, that it then received its first being : if the first were true, it would be true that the soul had its intellectual activity before, though the soul itself, incorporate, remember it not, because it operateth but *ut forma hominis*, (and its oblivion they take to be part of its penalty,) and they that think it a *radius* of the *anima mundi vel systematis*, must think that then it did intellectually animate *hunc mundum, vel mundi partem* : and to do so again, is the worst they can conjecture of it. As the rays of the sun, which

heat a burning glass, and by it set a candle on fire, are the same rays still diffused in the air, and illuminating, heating, and moving it, and terminated on some other body, and not annihilated, or debilitated, when their contracted operation ceaseth by breaking the glass, or putting out the candle ; and as the spirit of a tree still animateth the tree, when it retires from the leaves, and lets them fall. But this being an unproved imagination of men's own brains, we have no further use of it, than to confute themselves. But if the soul existed not till its incorporation, what wonder if it operate but *ut forma*, when it is united to the body for that use ? What wonder if its initial operations, like a spark of fire in tinder, or the first lighting of a candle, be weak, and scarce by us perceptible ? What wonder if it operate but to the uses that the creation did appoint it ; and first, as vegetative, fabricate its own body, as the maker's instrument, and then feel, and then understand ? And what wonder if it operate no further than objects are admitted ? And, therefore, what wonder if, in apoplexies, &c., such operations are intercepted ? But the departing soul is, 1. In its maturity. 2. No more united to this body, and so not confined to sense and imagination in its operations, and the admission of its objects. 3. And it is *sub ratione meriti*, and as a governed subject is ordinate to its reward ; which it was not capable of receiving in the womb, or in an apoplexy. And as we have the reasons before alledged to hold, 1. That it shall not be annihilated. 2. Nor dissolved. 3. Nor lose its essential faculties or powers. 4. Nor those essential powers be continued useless by the wise and merciful Creator, though, by natural revelation, we know not in what manner they shall act ; whether on any other body, and by what conjunction, and how far ; so by supernatural revelation we are assured, that there is a reward for the righteous, and that holy souls are still members of Christ, and live because he liveth, and that in the day of their departure they shall be with him in Paradise, and being absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord ; and that Christ, therefore, died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living, that is, of those that being dead, hence do live with him, and of those that yet live in the body ; for he that said, " God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," that is,

stands not related to them as his people, as a king to his subjects, is not himself the Lord of the absolute dead, but of the living.

Therefore, (as *Contarenius* against *Pomponatius de Immortal. Anim.* saith,) the immortality of the soul is proveable by the light of nature, but the manner of its future operation must be known by faith. And blessed be the Father of spirits, and our Redeemer, who hath sent and set up this excellent light, by which we see further than purblind infidels can do !

Sect. 2. But I deny not but even the Scripture itself doth tell us but little of the manner of our intellection when we are out of the body ; and it is not improbable that there is more imperfection in this mode of notional, organical, abstractive knowledge which the soul exerciseth in the body, than most consider of. And that as the eye hath the visive faculty in sleep, and when we wink, and an internal action of the visive spirits, (no doubt,) and yet seeth not any thing without till the eyelids are opened, (and was not made to see its own sight,) so the soul in the body is as a winking eye to all things that are not, by the sense and imagination, intromitted, or brought within its reach. And whether (*sicut non video visum, neque facultatem neque substantiam videntem, videndo tamen certo percipio me videre*, so it may be said, *Non intelligo immediate ipsam intellectionem, neque facultatem, aut substantiam intelligentem. Intellegendo tamen certo percipio me intelligere, quia actus intellectus in spiritus sensitivos operans sentitur* ; or whether we must further say, with Ackam, that *Intellectus tum intuitivè tum abstractivè se intelligit*, I leave to wiser men to judge, but I am very suspicious that the body is more a lantern to the soul than some will admit ; and that this *Lusus notionum secundarum*, or abstractive knowledge of things by organical images, names, and notions, is occasioned by the union of the soul with the body *ut formæ*, and is that childish knowledge which the apostle saith shall be done away. And how much of man's fall might consist in such a knowing of good and evil, I cannot tell, or in the overvaluing such a knowledge. And I think that when vain philosophy at Athens had called the thoughts and desires of mankind from great realities to the logical and philological game at words and notions, it was Socrates' wisdom to call them to more concerning studies, and Paul's greater wisdom to warn men to take heed of such vain

philosophy, and to labor to know God and Jesus Christ, and the things of the Spirit, and not to over-value this ludicrous, dreaming, worldly wisdom. And if I have none of this kind of notional, childish knowledge when I am absent from the body, the glass and spectacles may then be spared, when I come to see with open face, or as face to face. Our future knowledge is usually, in Scripture, called seeing. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) "We shall see face to face." (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) "We shall see him as he is." (1 John iii. 2. "Father, I will that those which thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," &c. (John. xvii. 24.) And intuitive knowledge of all things, as in themselves immediately, is a more excellent sort of knowledge than this, by similitudes, names, and notions, which our learning now consisteth in, and is but an art acquired by many acts and use.

Sect. 3. If the sun were as the heathens thought it, an intellective animal, and its emitted rays were vitally visive, and when one of those rays were received by prepared seminal matter (as in insects) it became the soul of an inferior animal, in this case, the said ray would operate in that insect, or animal, but according to the capacity of the recipient matter; whereas the sun itself, by all its emitted rays, would see all things intellectually, and with delight, and when that insect were dead, that ray would be what it was, an intellective, intuitive emanation. And though the soul in flesh do not know itself how it shall be united to Christ, and to all other holy souls, and to God himself, nor how near, or just of what sort that union will be, yet united it will be, and therefore will participate accordingly of the universal light or understanding to which it is united. The soul now, as it is, or operateth, in the foot or hand, doth not understand, but only as it is, and operateth, in the head. And yet the same soul which is in the hand, understandeth in the head, and the soul operateth not so selfishly or dividedly in the hand as to repine there because it understandeth not there; but it is quiet in that it understandeth in the head, and performeth its due operation in the hand. But this diversity of operations seemeth to be from the organs, and body's use, or need, but souls dismissed from the body seem to be as all eye, or intuitive light.

Therefore, though it might content us to say that our Head seeth all things, and we are united to him, yet we may say further, that we ourselves shall see God, and all things that are meet for us to see.

Sect. 4. And seeing it is most certain that the superior glorious regions are full of blessed spirits, who do see God and one another, having much more perfect operations than we have, (whose effects we mortals find here below,) why should I that find an intellectual nature in myself, make any doubt of my more perfect operations when I am dismissed hence, being satisfied that a soul will not lose its simple essence? Either those superior spirits have ethereal bodies to act in (or are such themselves) or not. If they are, or have such, why should I doubt of the like, and think that my substance or vehicle will not be according to the region of my abode? If not, why should I think that my departed soul may not know or see without an igneous or ethereal body or vehicle, as well as all those worlds of spirits. And the certainty of apparitions, possessions, and witches, do tell us, not only that there are such inhabitants of other regions, ordinarily invisible to us, but also that we are in the way to that happiness or misery which is in our invisible state.

Sect. 5. These things reviewed, (being partly mentioned before,) assuring me that I shall have actual intellection in my separated state, the region, with the objects, but, above all, the holy Scriptures, will tell me as much as it is meet that I should here know, what it is that I shall intuitively understand. The apostle (1 Cor. xiii. 10.—12.) doth distinguish our knowing in part, and knowing perfectly, knowing as a child, and as a man, knowing darkly and enigmatically, as in a glass, and knowing face to face as we are known. The great question is, when this time of perfection is? Whether he mean at death, or at the resurrection. If the observation of Dr. Hammond and Mr. Beverly, in his 'Great Soul of Man,' hold, that *ἀνάστασις* in Scripture, when 'the flesh or body' is not joined with it, signifies that life which the soul doth enter upon immediately after our death, and so that the soul hath that (after living) which is signified by the very word which we translate *resurrection*, then it will lead men to think that there is less difference between man's state at his first departure, and at his last resurrection, than

most think, even than Calvin himself thought. But the difference between our first and last state of after-life or resurrection cannot be now distinctly known. What difference there is now between Enoch, Elias, and those who rose at Christ's resurrection, and the rest of the saints, even the spirits of the perfected just, and whether the first have as much greater glory than the rest, as it is conceived that we shall have at the resurrection above that which immediately followeth death, what mortal man can tell? I am past doubt that flesh and blood (formally so called, and not only *ab accidente*, as sinful) shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (*vid.* Hammond in *loc.*) but that our natural bodies shall be made spiritual bodies: and how a spiritual body differeth from a spirit or soul, I pretend not well to understand, but must stay till God, by experience, or fuller light, inform me. But surely the difference is not like to be so great, as that a soul in flesh shall know in part, and a soul in a spiritual body shall know perfectly, and a soul between both shall not know at all. If it be perfection which we shall have in our spiritual body, it is like that we are nearer to that perfection, in knowledge and felicity, while we are between both, than when we are in the flesh.

Sect. 6. And sure a soul that (even Solomon saith) goeth upward, and to God that gave it, is liker to know God than that which is terminated in flesh, and operateth *ut forma*, according to its capacity and state; and a soul that is with Christ, is liker to know Christ, and the Father in him, than that which is present with the body, and absent from the Lord. What less can the promise of being with him signify?

Sect. 7. And, 1. As to the kind of knowledge, how excellent and more satisfactory a way will that of intuition, or intellective sense, be, than is our present way of abstraction, similitudes, and signs. What abundance of time, thoughts, and labor, doth it cost us now to learn our grammar, our rhetoric, and our logic. Our *artes loquendi, dicendi and disserendi*; to learn our wordy rules and axioms, in metaphysics, physics, &c. And when we have learned them all, (if all can be learned,) how little the nearer are many to the knowing of the signified realities. We oft get but a set of words to play with, to take up our time, and divert us from the matter; even as carnal men use the creatures which signify God, and are made to lead them up to him, to entangle them, and be the greatest and most

pernicious diversion of their souls from God ; so do too many learned men do by their organical, signal knowledge. They use it as men do cards, and romances, and plays, to delight their fancies, but they know less of the things that are worth their knowing, than many unlearned persons do, as I said before. Had not much of the Athenian learning been then a mere game, for men to play away their precious time at, and to grow proud of, while they were ignorant of saving realities, Christ and his Apostles had not so much neglected it as they did, nor Paul so much warned men to take heed of being deceived by that vain kind of philosophy, in which he seemeth to me to have greater respect to the universally esteemed Athenian arts, than, as Dr. Hammond thought, to the mere gnostic pretensions.

This poor, dreaming, signal, artificial knowledge is, 1. Costly. 2. Uncertain. 3. Contentious. 4. Unsatisfactory, in comparison of intuitive knowledge.

1. It is costly, as to the hard labor and precious time which must be laid out for it, as aforesaid. We grow old in getting us horses, and boots, and spurs, for our journey, and it is well if we begin it at the last ; like a man that would study the new-found planets, and the shape of Saturn's and Jupiter's satellites, and the *Viam Lacteam*, &c. ; and he spends his whole life in getting him the best tubes, or telescopes, and never useth them to his ends ; or like one that, instead of learning to write, doth spend his life in getting the best ink, paper, and pens ; or rather like one that learneth to write and print exactly, and not to understand what any of his words do signify. Men take their spectacles instead of eyes.

2. And when this learning is got, how uncertain are we whether the words have no ambiguity ; whether they give us the true notice of the speaker's mind, and of the matter spoken of. As I said before, what penury, and yet redundancy of words have we : of how various and uncertain signification ; changed by custom, or arbitrary design ; sometimes by the vulgar use, and sometimes by learned men that, being conscious of the defectiveness of the speaking art, are still tampering, and attempting to amend it. And some men speak obscurely on purpose, to raise in their readers a conceit of their subtle and sublime conceptions. And he that understandeth things most clearly,

and speaketh them most plainly, (which are the parts of true learning,) shall have much ado to get the matter out of dark and bewildering uncertainties, and to make others understand both it and him.

3. And hence come the greatest part of the contentions of the world, which are hottest among men that most pretend to wordy knowledge; as in traffic and converse, the more men and business we have to do with, usually the more quarrels and differences we have; so the more of this wordy learning, instead of realities, men pretend to, the more disputes and controversies they make; and the instruments of knowledge prove the instruments of error and contention. And, alas! how many applauded volumes are the snares, and troubles of the world! and how great a part of our libraries are vain janglings, and strife of words, and traps for the more ingenious sort, that will not be taken with cards and dice, robbing us of our time, destroying our love, depressing our minds, that should ascend to God, and diverting them from the great and holy things which should be the matter of our thoughts and joys; and filling the church with sects and strife, while every one striveth for the pre-eminence of his wit and notions, and few strive for holy love, and unity, and good works.

4. And all this while, alas! too many learned men do but lick the outside of the glass, and leave the wine within untasted. To know God and Christ, and heaven, and holiness, do give the soul a nourishing and strengthening kind of pleasure, like that of the appetite in its food; but this game at words is but a knowing of images, signs, and shadows, and so is but an image and shadow of true knowledge. It is not that grace which Austin's definition saith, *Nemo male utitur*; but it is that which the sanctified use well, and the unsanctified are puffed up by, and use to the opposition of truth, the ostentation of a foolish wit, and the deceit of their own souls. And if it be sanctified knowledge, it is but mediate, in order to our knowledge of things thus signified; and it is the real good which contenteth and beatifieth, though the notions may be a subordinate recreation; and intuition feasteth on these realities.

Sect. 9. II. And as to the objects of this intuition, their excellency will be the excellency of our knowledge. I. I shall know God

better. II. I shall know the universe better. III. I shall know Christ better. IV. I shall know the church, his body, better, with the holy angels. V. I shall better know the methods and perfection of the Scripture, and all God's dirigent word and will. VI. I shall know the methods and sense of disposing providence better. VII. I shall know the divine benefits, which are the fruits of love, better. VIII. I shall know myself better. IX. I shall better know every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know. X. And I shall better know all that evil, sin, Satan, and misery, from which I am delivered.

Sect. 10. I. Aquinas, and many others, took it for the chief, natural proof of the soul's immortality, that man, by nature, desireth not only to know effects, and second causes, but to rise up to the knowledge of the first cause ; and, therefore, was made for such knowledge in the state of his perfection ; but grace hath much more of this desire than nature. Not that we must not be content to be without a great deal of knowledge, which would be unmeet for us, useless, troublesome, or dangerous to us ; nor must we aspire to that which is above our capacity, and to know the unsearchable things of God ; but not to know God, is to know nothing, and to have an understanding worse than none. I presume not to pry into the secrets of the Almighty, nor to pretend to know more of God than, indeed, I do ; but O that I might know more of his perfections, of his will, and love, and ways, with that knowledge which is eternal life ! Blessed be that love that sent the Son of God from heaven, to reveal him to us in the gospel, as he hath done ; but all that hear the same words, and believe them, have not the same degree of light or faith. If an angel from heaven came down on earth to tell us all of God that we would know, and might lawfully desire and ask him, who would not turn his back on libraries, and universities, and learned men, to go and discourse with such a messenger ? What travel should I think too far, what cost too great, for one hour's talk with such a messenger ? But we must have here but such intimations as will exercise faith, and excite desire, and try us under the temptations of the world and flesh. The glorious light is the reward of the victory obtained by the conduct of the light of grace. God, in great mercy, even here beginneth the reward.

They that are true to the initial light, and faithfully follow on to know the Lord, do find, usually, such increase of light (not of vain notions, but of quickening and comforting knowledge of God) as greatly encourageth them still on to seek for more. It is very pleasant here to increase in holy knowledge, though it usually bring an increase of malignant opposition, and so of sorrows to the flesh. The pleasure that the mind hath in common knowledge, brings men through a great deal of labor to attain it. How many years' travel over land and sea do some men take, to see and know more of this lower world ; though it is little that they bring home, but more acquaintance with sin, and vanity, and vexation. How many more years do thousands spend in the reading multitudes of tedious volumes, that they may know what others knew before them. Printers and booksellers live by our desire of knowledge. What soul, then, on earth can possibly conceive how great a pleasure it will be for a glorified soul to see the Lord ? Though I cannot now conceive what that intuition of God himself will be, and whether it will not be a glorious kind of concluding or abstractive knowledge ; whether the glory which we shall see be only a created appearance of God, or be his very essence, it satisfieth me that it will be as perfect a knowledge as is fit for me to desire ; and I shall then desire no more than is fit : and what it is I shall then know by itself, for it is not otherwise to be clearly known. And all the pleasure that I shall have in heaven, in knowing any of the works of God, will be in my beholding God himself, his being, his vital power and action, his wisdom, and his love and goodness, in those works ; for he is the life and glory of them all. " Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

II. And, doubtless, it will be no small part of my delight to see and know God's perfect works, I mean the universe itself. I cannot say that I shall have so large a capacity as to comprehend all the world, or know it perfectly, and with an adequate knowledge ; but I shall know it in such perfection as is suitable to my capacity. It is exceeding pleasant to know the least particles of the works of God. With what diligence and delight have men endeavored to anatomise a body, yea, a small part of a carcass, and to know and describe poor worms and insects, plants and minerals ; and no man ever yet

perfectly knew the least of them all. No herbalist or physician ever yet knew the nature and uses of any one herb with an adequate knowledge. With what delight and diligence are physical searches carried on in the world, though still we are all but groping in the dark, and ignorant of many things for one that we know, and, therefore, know no one perfectly, because we are ignorant of the rest. But if, indeed, we were above our dreaming, erroneous hypothesis, and saw the nature of every creature, even in sea and land—this little spot of God's creation, and the compages of all, oh! what a delightful spectacle would it be! How much more to see the whole creation, yea, or one vortex or system of the globes, and to know their union and communion, and to behold their beauteous symmetry, and hear them, in concord and melodious harmony, praising the glory of their great, wise, amiable Creator. This were a delectable sight indeed. I shall have as much of this as I shall be capable of; and the wonders and glories of the works of God shall wrap up my soul in admiring, joyful praise for ever: and though here it be but little of God's work that we know, I have great reason to think that it will be far otherwise there. 1. Because the state of perfection must far excel our dark and infant state of imperfection. We have now desires after such a knowledge. His works are great, sought out of them that have pleasure therein: and these desires, being of God, shall not be frustrate. 2. Because there will be a proportionableness of the parts of our perfection; and therefore, as our love to God and his works will be there perfected, so will be our knowledge. 3. Because we shall know God himself as much as we are capable, and therefore we shall know his works in him, or by a subordinate knowledge, the less being in the greater. 4. Because God hath made his works to be known to his glory: but it is little that is here known of them by mortals; therefore they are known by them in heaven, who are fitted to improve that knowledge to his praise.

If Christ, who is the wisdom of God, will teach me the true philosophy, how to love God, and live here in all well-pleasing unto him, I shall quickly, in heaven, be a perfect philosophy; and experience will tell me that the surest way to be truly learned, and know the wonderful works of God, was to know, love, and serve the great

Creator ; and in him we shall have all, and without him we know nothing, and have nothing at all.

Satan tempted Christ, by showing him the "kingdoms and glory of the world," and promising them all to him if he would have worshipped him : but God will show me more than Satan could show, and give me more of that which is best, than Satan could give.

III. And that in heaven I shall better know Jesus Christ, and all the mystery of our redemption by him, will not be the least of my felicity ; for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom : and to know the mystery of his eternal godhead, in the second person, and his created nature, and the union of these, and to see God's wonderful design and work of grace in him laid open to our clearest view, O what beautifying knowledge would this be ! All dark texts concerning his person, his office, and his works, will then be expounded and fully understood. All those strange and difficult things which were the great exercise and honor of faith, will then be plain. Difficulties will no more be Satan's advantage to tempt us to unbelief, or doubting. The sight of the glory of my Lord will be my glory. (John xvii. 24.) If Paul had not then attained to perfection in the knowledge of Christ, and the power of his resurrection, but was pressing forward to reach that crown in the life to come, which he calleth "the resurrection of the dead," (Phil. iii. 9—12,) such as I must not expect here to attain it ; but when that which is perfect is come, this imperfect knowledge of faith will be done away, as childish knowledge is in manhood : and the glass and riddle shall be laid aside, when we "shall see face to face, and shall know as we are known," (1 Cor. xiii. 10—12,) as to our sight and knowledge of Christ and his triumphant body : for I dare not apply that phrase to the sight and knowledge of the divine essence, nor yet deny it.

If now, though we see not Christ, yet, believing, we love him, and rejoice in him with unspeakable, glorying joy ; what love and joy will the everlasting sight of our blessed Head excite there in the souls of all the glorified !

IV. I shall better, oh ! much better, know the heavenly Jerusalem, the triumphant church, the blessed angels, and glorified saints ; and as my love to them, so my knowledge of them, will not be the

least part of my heavenly delight. As strangely as I now look upward to that world, because I cannot see it with these eyes, it shall be my well-known everlasting habitation. Oh ! what a sight, what a joyful sight, will death show me by drawing aside the veil, or rather the Lord of Life, by turning death to my advantage ! When I am there at home, I shall no more think with confusion, fear, or doubting, of that blessed place or state. My fears, which now come from the smallness of my faith, will end when faith is turned into vision. As I know the several rooms in my house, and houses in the street, and streets in the city, so shall I then know the many mansions which Christ hath said are in his Father's house. Words now give me so poor, imperfect a conception of the world and things which I never saw, as that sometimes I can scarcely tell whether the joy of my faith, or the trouble of my dark apprehensions, be the greater. But when I shall see the place and persons, the glory which I heard of, that will be the delightful satisfying and possessing kind of knowledge. If Nehemiah, and the godly Jews, made so great a matter of seeing the walls of Jerusalem repaired ; and others, of the imperfect re-edifying of the temple, O what a joyful sight to me will the heavenly Jerusalem then be ! The most glorious sight will be at the great marriage-day of the Lamb, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that now believe : but the next to that will be the day of my particular deliverance, when I shall come to Christ, and see the saints admiring him in glory.

If I were of the opinion of those Greek fathers, who thought that stars were angels, or had intellectual souls, (matters unknown to us,) I should love them as my guardians, and take it to be yet more of my concernment to be advanced to the fuller knowledge of them. But seeing I know that angels love us, and by office do attend and keep us, and rejoice at our good, and at our repentance, and, which is far more, are more holy and excellent creatures than we are, it is therefore, my comfort to think that I shall better know them, and live in near and perpetual acquaintance and communion with them, a more sensible and sweet communion than we can have with them here. Devils are ærial, and near to this dark and sinful world, and oftener appear to men than angels. But the angels affect not

such descending appearances, till love and obedience to their Lord make it pleasing to them : and therefore we have but little knowledge, even of those that know, and love, and keep us. But when we come home to their nearest society and converse, to know them will be sweet and joyful knowledge : for they are more excellent creatures than the most glorious that are below the intellectual nature. They are full of light, and full of love to God and man. Had God bid me pray to them, I would not have refused it, but taken it for my honor ; but seeing he hath not, I will do that which he bid me, even love them, and rejoice in my relation to the innumerable company of them, in the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, (Heb. xii. 22,) and long to know and love them more ; expecting, ere long, to bear my part in the praises of God and of the Lamb, in the same choir where they are the precentors.

And that I shall know the spirits of the perfected just, and be of their communion, will be no small addition to my joy. How sweet hath one wise and holy, though weak and blemished, companion been to me here on earth ! And how lovely have God's graces in such, though sullied, appeared to me. Oh ! then, what a sight will it be when we shall see the millions of souls that shine in perfect wisdom and holiness with Christ. To see a garden that hath some beautiful flowers in it, is something : but if you saw whole fields and countries shining with them, it would be a glory, though fading, to the earth. A well-built city is a pleasanter sight than a single house, and a navy than a ship, and an army than one man. And if this poor, low world did all consist of wise, and just, and holy persons, O what an orderly, lovely world would it be ! If one kingdom consisted (prince, magistrates, pastors, and people) all of such, what a blessed kingdom would that be. The plague of wicked men's deceits, and falsehoods, oppressions, and iniquities, may help to make us sensible of this. It would be a great temptation to us to be loth to die, and leave such a country, were it not that the more the beauty of goodness appeareth, the more the state of perfection is desired. It is pleasant to me to pray in hope, as Christ hath commanded me, that earth may be made liker unto heaven, which now is become so like to hell. But when I shall see the society perfected in number, in holiness, in glory, in heavenly employment, the joyful praises of

Jehovah, the glory of God, and the Lamb shining on them, and God rejoicing over them as his delight, and myself partaking of the same, that will be the truly blessed day. And why doth my soul, imprisoned in flesh no more desire it?

V. I shall better understand all the word of God, the matter, and the method of it: though I shall not have that use for it as I have now in this life of faith, yet I shall see more of God's wisdom and his goodness, his love, mercy, and justice, appearing in it, than ever man on earth could do! As the creatures, so the Scriptures, are perfectly known only by perfect spirits. I shall then know how to solve all doubts, and reconcile all seeming contradictions, and to expound the hardest prophecies: that light will show me the admirable methods of those sacred words, where dark minds now suspect confusion! How evident and clear then will every thing appear to me? Like a small print when the light comes in, which I could not read in the glimmering twilight. How easily shall I then confute the cavils of all our present unbelievers! and how joyfully shall I praise that God and Savior that gave his church so clear a light to guide them through this darksome world, and so sure a promise to support them till they came to life eternal! How joyfully shall I bless him that by that immortal seed did regenerate me to the hopes of glory, and that ruled me by so holy and just a law!

VI. In that world of light I shall better understand God's present and past works of providence, by which he ordereth the matters of this world: the wisdom and goodness of them is little understood in little parcels; it is the union and harmony of all the parts which showeth the beauty of them, when the single parcels seem deformed, or are not understood. And no one can see the whole together but God, and they that see it in the light of his celestial glory: it is a prospect of that end, by which we have here any true understanding of such parcels as we see. Then I shall know clearly why, or to what use, God prospered the wicked, and tried the righteous by so many afflictions: I shall know why he set up the ungodly, and put the humble under their feet; why he permitted so much ignorance, ungodliness, pride, lust, oppression, persecution, falsehood, deceit, and other sins in the world: I shall know why the faithful are so few; and why so

many kingdoms of the world are left in heathenism, Mahometanism, and infidelity. The strange permissions which now so puzzle me, and are the matter of my astonishment, shall all be then as clear as day : I shall know why God disposed of me as he did through all my life ; and why I suffered what I did ; and how many great deliverances I had, which I understood not here, and how they were accomplished. All our misinterpretations of God's works and permissions will be then rectified : and all our controversies about them, which Satan hath made so great advantage of, (by a pretended zeal for some truths of God,) will then be reconciled, and at an end : and all the works of Divine Providence, from the beginning of the world, will then appear a most delectable, beauteous frame.

VII. And among all these works, I shall especially know more the nature and excellency of God's mercies and gifts of love, which here we too unthankfully undervalued and made light of. The special works of love should be the matter of our most constant, sweet, and serious thoughts, and the fuel of our constant love and gratitude : the lively sense of love and mercy maketh lively Christians, abounding in love to God, and mercy to others : but the enemy of God and man most laboreth to obscure, diminish, and disgrace God's love and mercies to us, or to make us disrelish them, that they may be unfruitful, as to their excellent ends and uses. Little do most Christians know how much they wrong God and themselves, and how much they lose by the diminutive, poor thoughts which they have of God's mercies : ingratitude is a grievous misery to the sinner, as gratitude is a very pleasant work. Many a thousand mercies we now receive, which we greatly undervalue. But when I come to the state and work of perfect gratitude, I shall have a more perfect knowledge of all the mercies which ever I received in my life, and which my neighbors, and friends, and God's Church, and the world, did ever receive : for though the things be past, the use of it is not past. Mercies remembered must be the matter of our everlasting thanks : and we cannot be perfectly thankful for them, without a perfect knowledge of them : the worth of a Christ, and all his grace, the worth of the gospel, the worth of our church privileges, and all God's ordinances, the worth of our books and friends, and helps of our life and

health, and all conveniences, will be better understood in heaven than the most holy and thankful Christian here understandeth them.

VIII. And it will be some addition to my future happiness, that I shall then be much better acquainted with myself; both with my nature, and with my sin and grace. I shall then better know the nature of a soul, and its formal faculties (three in one): I shall know the nature and way of its operations, and how far its acts are simple, or compound, or organical. I shall know how far memory, fancy, and sense, internal and external, belong to the rational soul, and whether the sensitive and rational are two or one; and what senses will perish, and what not. I shall know how the soul doth act upon itself, and what acts it hath that are not felt in sleep, in apoplexies, and in the womb.*

* * * * *

I shall know how far the soul is receptive, and what the *causa finalis* doth to it; and what each object is to the constitution or production of the act; yea, and what an act is, and what a habit; and how a soul, acting or habited, differeth from itself not acting or habited; and how its acts are many, and yet but one; or its faculties at least. Many other such difficulties will all be solved, which now philosophers contend about in the dark, and pass but under doubtful conjectures; or, at least, are known to very few.

And I shall know how God's Spirit operateth on souls; and how it is sent from Christ's human nature to work on man; and whether grace be properly, or only metaphorically, called a nature (a new nature, a divine nature) in us. I shall know what free-will is, and how man's will can be the first determiner of any act of its own in *specie morali* (good or evil) without being such a *causa prima*, as none but God can be: and so how far free acts are necessitated or not. I shall know what power the intellect hath on the will, and the will on the intellect; and what power the sense and fancy hath on either; and what any *intellectus agens* doth; whether it be to our intellection as the sun is to our sight. I shall know what is meant by the

* A large page of philosophical difficulties, growing out of the inquiries of "Science falsely so called," is here omitted. What is retained is a sufficient specimen.—ED.

degrees of acts and habits in the soul ; and whether there be divers degrees of substantiality, or of the *virtus vel facultas formalis* of several souls : I shall know better the difference of habits called acquired and infused ; and what common grace is, and what it doth ; and what nature can do of itself, or by common grace, without that which is proper to the justified ; and how far any degrees of grace are lost.

I shall know what measure of grace I had myself ; and how far I was mistaken in myself ; and what acts were sincere ; and how much that was not sound was mixed ; and what was of myself and sin.

I shall know much more of my sins than here I ever knew, the number and the greatness of them ; that so I may know, with greatest thankfulness and love, how much I am beholden to pardoning and healing grace.

Yea, I shall know more of my body, as it was the habitation of my soul, or the organical matter on which unitedly it worked. I shall know how far it helped or hindered me ; and what were all those obscure diseases, that puzzled all the physicians, and myself ; and how marvellously God sustained, preserved, and oft delivered me ; and what of my actions was to be imputed to the body, and what of them to the soul.

IX. And every fellow-creature, which I am concerned to know, I shall know far better than now I do, both things and persons : the good and bad, the sincere and the hypocrites, will be there discerned : and many an action that here went for honorable, covered or colored with wit or worldly advantages, or false pretences, will then be found to be odious and unjust : and wickedness will be flattered or extenuated no more : and many a good and holy work which false men, through wickedness and worldly interest, reproached as some odious crime, will there be justified, honored, and rewarded. All sciences are there perfect, without our ambiguous terms, or imperfect axioms, and rules of art.

X. And, lastly, I shall better know from what enemies, what sins, what dangers, I was here delivered : what contrivances and malicious endeavors of Satan and his instruments God defeated ; how many snares I escaped : and I shall better know how great my deliverance is by Christ from the wrath to come. Though we shall not know

hell by painful sense, we shall know it so far as is necessary to fill us with gratitude to our Redeemer : yea, we shall know much of it far better than the damned spirits that feel it. For we shall know, by sweet and full fruition, what the joy and blessedness is which they have lost : when they have no such kind of knowledge.

All this knowledge will be thus advanced to my glorified soul beyond what I can here conceive in flesh : and is it not then far better to be with Christ ?

IV. *The constitutive reasons from the state of my will.*

Sect. 1. But it is the will that is to the soul what the heart is to the body : as it is the prime seat of morality, so is it the chief seat of felicity. My greatest evil is there ; and my greatest subjective good will be there. Satan did most against it, and God will do most for it. And will it not be better to be with Christ than here ?

1. It will not there be tied to a body of cross interests and inclinations, which is now the greatest snare and enemy to my soul ; which is still drawing my love, and care, and fears, and sorrows, to and for itself, and turning them from my highest interest. How great a deliverance will it be to be freed from the temptations, and the inordinate love, and cares, and fears for this corruptible flesh ?

2. My will shall not there be tempted by a world of inferior good, which is the bait and provision for the flesh, where meat, and sleep, and possessions, house, lands, and friends, are all become my snares and danger. God's mercies will not be made there the tempter's instruments. I shall not there have the flatteries or frowns, promises or threatenings, of the tyrants of the world to tempt me : bad company will not infect me, nor divert me : the errors of good men will not seduce me ; nor reputation or reverence of the wise, learned, or religious, draw me to imitate them in any sin.

3. I shall there have none of Satan's solicitations, to pervert my will : he will not have that advantage by my sense and fancy, nor that access unto me, as now he hath. But of this I spake before.

Sect. 2. My will shall there be better than here, 1. Negatively because, 1. There will be nothing that is displeasing to God : no sinful inclination, habit, or act : nothing to strive against God's Spirit ; nor

grudge at any word or work of God : no principles of enmity or rebellion left. 2. There will be nothing that is against the good of others : no inclinations to injury, or any thing that is against my neighbor's or the common good. 3. There will be nothing in it that is cross to itself; no more war or striving in me ; not a law in my mind, and a law in my members, that are contrary to each other : no crossness between sense and reason, nor between the sensitive appetite and the rational: all will be at unity and peace within.

Sect. 3. II. Positively Christ will have finished his cure on my will. The work of sanctification will be perfect, and, I. My will shall there, by union and communion, be made conformable to the will of Christ, and so unto the Father's will. This must needs be meant (whatever more) in the prayer of Christ, where he prayeth, "That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us, that they may be one, even as we are one." (John xvii. 21, 22.) The will of Christ, and of the Father, will be my will, that is, I shall love and will (dispositively and actually) the same that God loveth and willeth (in the measure of a creature, infinitely below him.) And if so, 1. How can the will of man have greater honor, than to be the same with the will of God? Assimilation to a king, among us poor mortals, goeth for honor ; assimilation to angels is much more. That we shall be like, or equal to, angels, is a high part of the blessed's praise ; but how much more is it, to be thus far like to God. Indeed, God's image, and the divine nature in us here, can be no less than this similitude to God's will in the degree that we have it. But, alas ! that degree is so very low, as that we can hardly tell whether our similitude or dissimilitude be the more ; I mean, whether our wills are for more that God willeth, or against more. Oh, how many thousand wishes and desires have we had, which are against the will of God ! But there we shall have the full impression of God's will, upon our wills, as face answereth face in a glass, or as the wax answereth the seal ; as the finger on the outside answereth to the motion of the clock within, so, in all things which belong to our duty and perfection, we shall answer the will of God. As the echo answereth the voice, defectively, but

truly, without contradiction or discord, so will our wills be as the echo of God's will.

2. And then I am sure that there will be nothing in my will but good ; for God willeth no evil.

3. And this will be virtually all obedience ; for all sin is voluntary, and all moral good is primarily in the will.

4. And then there will be no matter of disquiet in me, but all will be in perfect peace ; for all that is like God will be pleasing both to God and me ; no troubling crossness will remain.

5. And how easy and sweet then will all my obedience be, when I shall perfectly will it, without any reluctancy or averseness ? All will be my very pleasure that I do.

Sect. 4. And seeing my will shall be the same with the will of God, it followeth that it shall never be frustrate, but I shall have all whatsoever I would have, and shall be and do whatsoever I would be and do. For I shall desire nothing but what God willeth, and God's will shall certainly be done. I shall have as much love and joy as I would have ; I shall be as happy as I would be ; I shall desire nothing for others but it shall be done. Indeed, if God's will were there unknown to me, I might ignorantly go against it, as I do here ; but there, before I will or desire any thing, I shall know whether it be God's will or not, so that I shall never wish any thing which shall not be accomplished. And as it is God's perfection to have his will always done, (though all his laws be not obeyed,) so my perfection shall consist in this likeness unto God, that my will shall be still fulfilled. And then Christ's promises will be perfectly performed, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will give it you, Ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you." (John xv. 16, and xvi. 23, and xiv. 13, 14, and xv. 7.) While their will was the same with the will of Christ : but he saith not that it shall all be given us here. We ask for perfection, and we shall have it, but not here.

Sect. 5. III. Yea, my will itself shall be my fruition, for it shall not be the will of one in need ; a desire of what I want, for I shall want nothing ; therefore, it is said that we shall thirst no more : but it will be a complacency in what I do possess, and in this also my perfec-

tion will be the image of God's perfection : not but that all creatures still receive from God, and in that sense may be said to need, in that they have nothing of themselves, but all by gift and communication from him ; but being still and full possessors, they cannot properly be said to want. Complacency in that which we possess is love and pleasure in one act ; and, indeed, pleasure and love are the same thing. To love any thing, is to have that thing to be pleasing to my mind. Even when it is wanted, it is thought on as a pleasing thing, and therefore desired, so that the desiring act of the will is but a second act occasioned by want, and following the first act, which is complacency, or simple love. I desire it because I love it. Rightly, therefore, is the will itself called love, for in the first act love, will, and rational appetite, are all words of the same signification. My will, therefore, must needs be perpetually full of perfect joy, when enjoying love and pleasure will be my will itself. Thus shall I have in me the spring of living waters, and the comforter will then perfectly do his work, when my constant will itself shall be comfort. Well, therefore, is glory said to be the perfection of sanctifying grace, when this grace is the beginning of that love and joy which glory is the perfection of ; and perfection is the Spirit's work.

Sect. 6. IV. And it will be much of my felicity that my will shall be confirmed and fixed in this conformity to the will of God, and holy love will be its nature. Now both understanding and will are so lamentably mutable, that further than God promiseth to uphold us, we know not one day what we shall think, judge, or will, the next. But when love is as a fixed nature in us, we shall be still the same, adhering to amiable goodness, without intermission or cessation. It will be as easy to us (and more) to love God and holiness, as it is to the hungry and thirsty to love meat and drink, or to the proud to love praise or domination, yea or to any man to love his life. And we shall be no more weary of loving, than the sun is of shining, or than the hungry is of feasting, or a friend of friendly love and converse. Nay, the comparison is quite too low, for all creatures here have a fading vanity which wearieth the satiated or failing appetite, but there is no such thing in heaven.

Sect. 7. And as from the nature of that act, so much more from the nature of the object, my love will appear to be my happiness. The objects (which are the matter of the act) will be these :—

1. God himself will be the full and everlasting object of my love. And he that could but understand as well as those in heaven do, what this word signifieth, ‘to love God, and be beloved of him,’ would say, that there needs no other description of perfect happiness : perfect, joyful complacency in God is the heaven which I desire and hope for. This is my felicity, and much more. As I am the agent of love to God, and the object of God’s love to me, it is my felicity. As God is the ultimate object of my love, and the agent of his love to me, (that is, of the effects of it,) so it is unspeakably more high and excellent than to be my felicity. Love is the closure of the wills of God and man, and as it is God’s part or interest, (efficiently or objectively) it is infinitely more excellent than as it is my part and interest.

Sect. 8. In God there is all that love can desire for its full everlasting faith. 1. He is infinitely good in himself, that is, most amiable : and the nature of man’s will is to love good as good. Could we love God with a love that is adequate to the object, we should be God ourselves, which is impossible, none but God can adequately know God or love him. In God’s love to himself, both the act and object are infinite, and, indeed, are both one, there being not that formally which we know by the name of act and object ; but ‘act and object’ are our analogical, inadequate conceptions of that act of God which is his essence. But in our love to God the act is finite, and infinitely below the object ; yea, the object, which in reality is itself infinite, yet proximately as the *esse cognitum* is the object of our love, is finite there. It is the conception or idea of God in the intellect, which is the proper and nearest object of the will, and this is as a face in a glass, a shadow, even the finite little shadow of an infinite Being. The same infinite good is a felicity to divers persons in divers degrees, according as they diversely love him, and are receptive of his love.

Sect. 9. 2. God, who is infinitely good in himself, will be that most suitable good to me, and meetest for the dearest embracements of my will. For, He hath all in himself that I need or can de-

sire. There is no room, nothing above him, or beyond him, or without him, for love to cleave to. Though below him the creature, though not being without him, is loved without him, by the deception of the mind.

Sect. 10. He is willing to be loved by me. He disdaineth not my love. He might have refused to be embraced by such affections as have so oft and sinfully polluted themselves by embracing vanity and filth. As persons of state, and stately cleanliness, will not be touched by filthy hands, much less let dogs or dirty swine leap on them which come from wallowing in the mire; God might have driven me away from the happiness of loving him, and have denied me the leave for so high a work, but he commandeth my love, and maketh it my greatest duty. He inviteth and entreateth me, as if he were a gainer by my happiness. He seeketh to me to seek to him, and as he is the first, so is he the most earnest suitor. He is far readier to receive my love than I am to give it him. All the compassionate invitations which I have had from him here, by his word and mercies, assure me that he will there receive me readily; he that so valued my poor, cold imperfect love to him on earth, will not reject my perfect love in heaven. He that made it the great work of his Spirit to effect it, will not refuse it when it is made perfect by himself.

Sect. 11. And he is near to me, and not a distant God out of my reach, and so unsuitable to my love. Blind unbelievers may dream that he is far off, but he is as near us, even now, as we are to ourselves. He is not from any of us, for in him we live, and move, and have our being. The light of the sun is not so near my eyes, as God will be for ever to my mind. When he would sanctify us to love him, he bringeth us nigh to him in Christ. As we love ourselves easily as being, as they say, the nearest to ourselves, so we shall as easily love God as ourselves, when we see that he is as near us as we are to ourselves, as well as that he is infinitely more amiable in himself.

Sect. 12. And because of the imparity of the creature and the Creator, he hath provided such means to demonstrate to us his nearness, as are necessary to the exercise of our love. We shall see

his glory, and taste his love, in our glorified Mediator, and in the glory of the church and world. God will condescend to show himself to us according to our capacities of beholding him. Here we see him in his works and word, and there we shall see him in the glory of all his perfect works. But this leadeth me to the second object of my love.

Sect. 13. II. Under God, as I shall see, so I shall delightfully love, the glorious perfection of the universe, even the image of God in all the world; as my love will be my delight, so I shall love best, that which is best, and most delight in it: and the whole is better than any part; and there is a peculiar beauty and excellency in the whole world, as perfect, compaginate, harmonious, which is not to be found in any part, no, not in Christ himself, as man, nor in his church.

The marvellous inclination that all things have to union, even the inanimates, might persuade me, if I felt it not certainly in myself, that it is most credible that man also shall have the like inclination, and such as is agreeable to the nature of his faculties; and therefore our love and delight in all things is that uniting inclination in man.

Sect. 14. III. And I shall have a special love to the holy society, the triumphant, universal church, consisting of Christ, angels, and saints, as they are specially amiable in the image and glory of God. God himself loveth them more than his inferior works; that is, his essence, which is love, and hath no degrees or change, doth send forth fuller streams of good upon them, or maketh them better and happier than the rest. And my love will imitate the love of God, in my capacity. And if societies on earth, more holy and wise than others, though imperfectly, are very amiable, what then will the heavenly society be? Of this I spake before (of knowing them).

Sect. 15. 1. Think here, O my soul, how sweet a state unto thee it will be to love the Lord Jesus, thy glorified Head, with perfect love! When the glory of God, which shineth in him, will feast thy love with full and everlasting pleasure, the highest created perfection of power, wisdom, and goodness, refulgent in him, will not give leave

to thy love to cease, or intermit, or abate its fervor. When thou shalt see in the glorified church the precious fruits of Christ's redemption, grace, and love, this also will feed thy love to him, from whom this heavenly glory cometh. And when thou shalt feel thyself possessed of perfect happiness, by his love to thee, will not this also do its part? Yea, the remembrance of all his former love, what he did for thee, and what he did in thee here on earth, how he called thee with an holy calling; how he washed thee in his blood from all thy sins; how he kindled in thee those desires which tended to that perfect glory; how he renewed thy nature; how he instructed, and guided, and preserved thee from thy childhood; and how many and how great sins, enemies, dangers and sufferings, he saved thee from; all this will constrain thee everlastingly to love him. Thus, (though he give the kingdom to the Father, as ceasing his mediatory, healing, saving work of acquisition,) he will be to thee the Mediator of fruition. God in him will be accessible, and condescend to a suitable communion with us. (John xvii. 24.) And as Christ is thy life, radically and efficiently, as he is the giver of grace and Spirit of love, so he will be objectively thy life as he is lovely, and it will be formally thy life to love him, and God in him, for ever.

Sect 16. 2. Think, also, O my soul, how delectable it will be to love (as well as to know) those angels that most fervently love the Lord! They will be lovely to thee as they have loved thee, and more as they have been lovers and benefactors to the church and to mankind; but far more as they are so many refulgent stars, which continually move and shine, and burn in purest love to their Creator. O blessed difference between that amiable society of holy spirits, and this dark, mad, distracted, wicked world! Here devils tempt me within, and devils incarnate persecute me without. Blaspheming of God, reviling godliness, deriding the sacred Scriptures, and sacred exercises, malignant slandering of the servants of God, hating, persecuting, silencing, and saying all manner of evil falsely of them, for their righteousness' sake, while such crimes are pretended, as they once falsely charged on Christ himself. This is the conversation of those that I have long dwelt with in the world: atheism, infidelity, papal church tyranny, bloody wars, destroying the righteous, oppress-

ing the poor, adultery and fornication, stigmatising perjury, ambition, violence, covetousness, deceit, sottish ignorance, wilfulness in sin, hatred of reproof, revengeful malice ; these, and such like, are the fruits of the soil where I have long sojourned (though through the grace of Christ, among the faithful, there have been better fruits). And is not the company of holy angels better than this ? With whom God is all ; who are even made up of shining wisdom, and holy love, and beneficent activity ; who are the blessed choir that melodiously sing forth the high praises of their Maker. Among whom God dwelleth as in his presence-chamber, or his temple, and in whom he taketh his great delight. With these I shall see or hear no evil. No mixture of fools or wicked ones do pollute or trouble their society. There will be no false doctrine, no evil example, no favoring wickedness, no accusing goodness, no hurtful violence, but holy, powerful, operative love, will be all, and do all, as their very nature, life, and work. And is it not better to be a door-keeper there, than to dwell in the palaces of wickedness ? And is not a day with them better than a thousand here ?

Sect 17. 3. And with the holy angels I shall love holy souls that are made like unto them, and joined with them in the same society ; and it is likely with them judge, that is, rule the world. All their infirmities are there put off with the flesh ; they also are spirits made up of holy life, and light, and love. There is none of their former ignorance, error, imprudence, selfishness, contentiousness, impatience, or any other troubling, hurtful thing. When I think with what fervent love to God, to Jesus Christ, and to one another, they will be perfectly united there, alas, how sad and how shameful is it, that they should here be prone to disaffections and divisions, and hardly agree to call each other the servants of God, or to worship God in the same assemblies ; but the remnants of dividing principles, *viz.*, pride, error, and uncharitableness ; will be all left behind. Society with imperfect saints is sweet ; the imperfect image of God upon them is amiable ; but their frailties here are so vexatious, that it is hard to live with some of them in peace. But perfect love will make them one ; and oh, how delightful will that communion of saints be ! I can never forget how sweet God hath made the course of my pil-

grimage, by the fragrantcy and usefulness of his servants' graces; how sweet have my bosom friends been, though mutable! How sweet hath the neighborhood of the godly been! How sweet have the holy assemblies been; and how many hours of comfort have I there had! How profitable have their writings, their conference, and their prayers been! What then will it be, to live in the union of perfect love with perfect saints in heaven forever, and with them concordantly to love the God of love?

Sect. 18. III. And as the act and object of love will constitute my felicity, so will my reception from the love of God and his creatures, be sweeter to me than my own activity can be; for it is mutual love that makes it up. I shall not be the fountain of my own delights; nor can I act till I am acted, nor offer any thing to God, but what I have first received from him. And receive I shall, abundantly and continually, and from thence shall overflow to God, and receiving and returning are now, and will be, the circular, endless motion, and our true perpetual life and happiness.

Sect. 19. All my receivings shall be from God. His love is not a mere immanent will, nor a wish which toucheth not the object; but it is what heat is in, or from, the sun or fire; it is an efflux of goodness: it is the most powerful, sweet, communicating principle, or work. All love is communicative; but none in comparison of God's; as there is none primitively and simply good but God. How much doth love in the affairs of men? All that is pleasant in the world is it, or its effects. * * Were it not for natural love, mothers would never endure the pain, and trouble, and care, which is necessary to human birth and education; were it not for love, parents would never labor all their lives to leave their children well instructed, and well provided for, when they are gone. My food would not please me did I not love it, and I should neglect it to the neglect of my life. Did I not love my books, and learning itself, I should never have bestowed so much of seventy years in poring on them, and searching for knowledge as I have done; did I not love my house, my conveniences and necessities, I should neglect them, and they would be to me of small use; did I not love my friends, I should be less profitable to them, and they to me; did I not love my life, I should neglect

it, and never have endured the labor and cost about it as I have done. If a man love not his country, posterity, and the common good, he will be as a burdensome drone in the hive, or as pernicious vermin. What is done in the world that is good, but by love?

And if created love be so necessary, so active, so communicative, how much more will the infinite love of the Creator be! His love is now the life of the world; his love is the life of nature in the living, the life of holiness in saints, and the life of glory in the blessed. In this infinite love it is that I, and all the saints, shall dwell for evermore. And if I dwell in love, and love in me, surely I shall have its sweet and plenteous communication, and shall ever drink of the rivers of pleasure. It is pleasant to nature to be beloved of others, especially of the great and wise, and good; much more to have all the communications of love, in converse and gifts, in plenty and continuance, which may be still expressing it to our greatest benefit! Had I a friend now that did for me but the hundredth part of what God doth, how dearly should I love him! Think then, think believingly, seriously, constantly, O my soul, what a life thou shalt live for ever in the presence, the face, the bosom of infinite, eternal love. He now shineth on me by the sun, and on my soul by the sun of righteousness; but it is as through a lantern, or the crevices of my darksome habitation; but then he will shine on me, and in me, openly, and with the fullest streams and beams of love.

Sect. 20. God is the same God in heaven and earth, but I shall not be the same man. Here I receive comparatively little, but live in darkness, doubtful and frequent sorrows, because my receptivity is less; the windows of my soul are not open to his light; sin hath raised clouds, and consequently storms, against my comforts; the entrances to my soul by the straits of flesh and sense are narrow; and they are made narrower by sin than they were by nature. Alas, how often would love have spoken comfortably to me, and I was not at home to be spoken with, but was abroad among a world of vanities, or was not at leisure, or was asleep, and not willing to be awaked! How oft would love have come in and dwelt with me, and I have unkindly shut my doors against him; how oft would he have been with me in secret, where he freely would embrace me, but I had some

pleasing company or business which I was loth to leave ; how oft would he have feasted me, and had made all ready, but I was taken up and could not come. Nay, when his table hath been spread before me, Christ, grace, and glory, have been offered to me, my appetite hath been gone, or dull, and all hath been almost neglected by me, and hath scarce seemed pleasant enough to be accepted, or to call off my mind from luscious poison. How oft would he have shined upon me, and I have shut my windows or mine eyes ; he was jealous indeed, and liked not a partner ; he would have been all to me, if I would have been all for him. But I divided my heart, my thoughts, my love, my desires, and my kindnesses ; and, alas, how much did go besides him, yea against him, to his enemies, even when I knew that all was lost, and worse than lost, which was not his. What wonder then, if so foolish and unkind a sinner had little pleasure in his love ; and if so great ingratitude and neglect of sovereign goodness were punished with such strangeness, and fears, and faintings, as I have long with groans lamented. *Recipitur ad modum recipientis.*

But in heaven I shall have none of these obstructions ; all old unkindness and ingratitude will be forgiven ; the great Reconciler in whom I am beloved will then have perfected his work ; I shall then be wholly separated from the vanity which here deceived me ; my open soul will be prepared to receive the heavenly influx ; with open face I shall behold the open face of glorifying love ; I shall joyfully attend his voice, and delightfully relish the celestial provisions. No disease will corrupt my appetite ; no sluggishness will make me guilty again of my old neglects ; the love of the Father, by the grace of the Son, and the communion of the holy Spirit, will have got the victory over all my deadness, folly, and disaffection, and my God-displeasing and self-undoing averseness and enmity will be gone for ever. The perfect love, which God doth first effect in me, will be my everlasting receptivity of the fullest love of God. Benevolent love will make me good ; that is, a holy lover of God ; and then pleased love will make me his delight, and benevolence will still maintain me in my capacity.

Study this heavenly work of love, O my soul ; these are not dead or barren studies, these are not sad, unpleasant studies, it is only love that can relish love and understand it ; the will here hath its gust so like to an understanding, as make some philosophers say, *voluntas percipit* is a proper phrase. What can poor, carnal worldlings know of glorious love, who study it without love ? What sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, a lifeless voice, are they that preach of God, and Christ, and heavenly glory, without love ; but gazing upon the face of love in Christ, and tasting of its gifts, and looking up to its glorious reign, is the way to kindle the sacred fire in thee. Look upwards, if thou wouldest see the light that must lead thee upwards. It is not for nothing that Christ hath taught us to begin our prayers with "Our Father which art in heaven ;" it is 'fatherly' love that must win our hearts, and that must comfort them ; and it is in 'heaven' where this is gloriously manifested. As I said before, as the soul is in all the body, but yet understandeth not in the hand as it doth in the head, and rejoiceth not in the foot as it doth in the heart ; so God, that is everywhere, doth not everywhere glorify his love as he doth it in heaven. Thither, therefore, the mind and eye are even by nature taught to look up as to God, as we look a man in the face when we speak to him, rather than to his feet, though his soul be also there.

My sinful heart hath needed sorrow. My careless, rash, presumptuous soul hath needed fears ; and I have had some part of these. Mercy saw it good for me, as necessary to prevent my dangerous deceits and lapses ; and O that in the hour of sensual temptations I had feared more, and departed from evil. But it is holy love that must be my life ; or else I am dead notwithstanding fear.

Oh, come, then, and study the life of love. It is more of a holy nature than of art ; but yet study must do much to prepare thee to receive it. This is the great use of a heavenly conversation. It is the contemplation, belief, and hope of the glorious state of love hereafter, that must make us like it, and kindle it in us here. The burning glass must be turned directly to the sun, if you will have it set any thing on fire. There is a carnal or common love to God, which is kindled in men by carnal pleasures ; but a holy love, like that in

heaven, must be studiously fetched from heaven, and kindled by the foresight of what is there, and what we shall be there for ever. Faith must ascend and look within the veil. Thou must not live as a stranger to thy home, to thy God, and Savior, and thy hopes. The fire that must warm thee is in heaven, and thou must come near it, or open thyself to its influence, if thou wilt feel its powerful efficacy. It is night and winter with carnal minds, when it is day and summer with those that set their faces heavenward.

Sect. 21. But, though all my receivings will be from God, they will not be from him alone. We must live in perfect union also with one another, and with all the heavenly society; and therefore as we must love them all, so shall we be beloved by them all: and this will be a subordinate part of our blessedness. God there will make use of second causes, even in communicating his love and glory.

Sect. 22. 1. The Lord Jesus Christ will not only be the object of our delightful love, but will also love us with an effectual, operative love for ever. His love will be as the vital heat and motion of the heart to all the members, the root of our life and joy. The love of our Redeemer will flow out into us all as the vital spirits, and his face of glory will be the sun of the heavenly Jerusalem, and will shine upon us, and show us God; and in his light we shall have light. Did his tears for a dead Lazarus make men say, 'Behold how he loved him!' O, then, what will the reviving beams of heavenly life make us say of that love which filleth us with the pleasures of his presence, and turneth our souls into joy itself. He comforteth us now by the teaching of his word; but, surely, the fruition of salvation will be more gladdening than the tidings of it. When he that told us of glory, in his gospel, shall give it us, we shall not only believe but feel that he loveth us.

Sect. 23. Believe, O my soul, thy Savior's love, that thou mayest foretaste it, and be fit to feel it. We were incapable, in sinful flesh, of seeing him otherwise than as clothed with flesh, and his consolations were administered by a word of promise suitable to his appearance; but when he withdrew his bodily presence, the Comforter was sent with a fuller consolation. But all that was but the earnest, and the first-fruits, of what he will be to us forever. Be not seldom, nor un-

believing, nor slight, in the thoughts of thy Savior's love, for it is he that is the way to the infinite love. Let thy believing be so much of thy daily work, that thou mayest say that he dwelleth in thy heart by faith; (Eph. iii. 17;) and that while thou livest here, it is Christ that liveth in thee; and that thy life in the flesh is not a fleshly life, but by the faith of the Son of God that hath loved thee, and given himself for thee; (Gal. ii. 20;) and that though thou see him not, yet, believing thou lovest him also with unspeakable joy, as believing the unspeakable perfect joy which his love will communicate to thee for ever.

Look upon the sun, and think thus with thyself: How wonderful is the emanation of this sun: its motion, light, and heat, communicated to so many millions of creatures all over the earth, and in the seas. What if all these beams of light and heat were proportionable beams of perfect knowledge, love, and joy; and that all creatures that are under the sun had, from its influx, as much wisdom, love, and joy, as they have light, heat and motion. Would not then this earth be as a world of angels, and a heaven? O what a blessed world would it be; and what a benefactor would the sun be to the world! Why, even such will Jesus Christ be to the celestial world. He is the sun of glory. His influence will send forth life and light, and joyful love upon all the blessed, from the face of God, as the sun sends forth from God its motion, light, and heat, upon this world. Now, therefore, begin, and live upon him: live upon the influence of his grace, his teaching, love-kindling, and quickening grace, that thou mayest have his name and mark, and he may find in thee something of himself, or of his own, when thou comest to his righteous trial. His grace is not in my power, nor at my command. It is not meet it should be so; but he hath not bid me seek and beg in vain. If he had never told me that he will give it me, it is equal to a promise if he do but bid me seek and ask. But I have more. He teacheth me to pray: he maketh my prayers: he writeth me out a prayer-book on my heart: he giveth me desires, and he loveth to be importuned by them: his Spirit is first a spirit of supplication, and after of consolation, and in both a spirit of adoption. So far is he from being loth to be troubled with my importunity, that he seeketh me to

seek his grace, and is displeased with me that I will ask and have no more.

All this is true : but how then cometh my soul to be yet so low, so dark, so fond of this wretched flesh and world, and so backward to go home, and dwell with Christ? Alas! a taste of heaven on earth is a mercy too precious to be cast away upon such as have long grieved and quenched the Spirit, and are not, by diligent and patient seeking, prepared to receive it. He that proclaimeth a general peace, will give peace only to the sons of peace. If, after such unkind neglects, such wilful sins as I have been guilty of, I should expect to be suddenly in my Savior's arms, and to be feasted presently with the first-fruits of heaven, I should look that the Most Holy should too little manifest his hatred of my sin. My conscience remembereth the follies of my youth, and many a later odious sin; and telleth me that if heaven were quite hid from my sight, and I should never have a glimpse of the face of glorious, eternal love, it were but just. I look upward from day to day; I groan to see his pleased face, and better to know my God and my home. I cry to him daily, 'My God, this little is better than all the pleasures of sin. My hopes are better than all the possessions of this world. Thy gracious looks have oft revived me, and thy mercies have been immeasurable to my soul and body. But, oh, how far short am I of what, even fifty years ago, I hoped sooner to have attained! Where is the peace that passeth understanding, that should keep my heart and mind in Christ? Oh! where is the seeing, the longing, the rejoicing, and triumphing faith? Where is that pleasant familiarity above, that should make a thought of Christ and heaven to be sweeter to me than the thoughts of friends, or health, or all the prosperity and pleasure of this world? Do those that dwell in God, and God in them, and have their hearts and conversations in heaven, attain to no more clear and satisfying perceptions of that blessed state than I have yet attained? Is there no more acquaintance above to be here expected; no livelier sense of future joys, nor sweeter foretaste; no fuller silencing of doubts and fears? I am not so loth to go to a friend, nor to the bed where I oft spend the night in restless pains and rolling, as I have too often been to come to thee. Alas! how many of thy servants

are less afraid to go to a prison than to their God, and had rather be banished to a land of strangers than sent to heaven. Lord, must I, that am called thy child, and an heir of heaven, and a co-heir with Christ, have no more acquaintance with my glorified Lord, and no more love to thee that art my portion, before I go hence, and come before thee? Shall I have no more of the heavenly life, and light, and love? Alas! I have scarce enough in my meditations to denominate them truly heavenly meditations. I have scarce enough in a prayer to make it indeed a heavenly prayer, or in a sermon to make it a heavenly sermon: and shall I have no more when I come to die? Must I go hence so like a stranger to my home? Wilt thou take strangers into heaven, and know them as thine that do not better know thee here? O my God, vouchsafe a sinner yet more of his Spirit that came down on earth to call up earthly minds to God, and to open heaven to all believers! O what do I beg for so frequently, so earnestly, for the sake of my Redeemer, as the spirit of life and consolation, which may show me the pleased face of God, and unite all my affections to my glorified Head, and draw up this dark and drowsy soul to love and long to be with thee?"

But, alas! though these are my daily groans, how little yet do I ascend. I dare not blame the God of love; he is full and willing. I dare not blame my blessed Savior; he hath showed that he is not backward to do good. I dare not accuse the Holy Spirit; it is his work to sanctify and comfort souls. If I knew no reason of this, my low and dark estate, I must needs conclude that it is somewhat in myself. But, alas! my conscience wants not matter to satisfy me of the cause. Sinful resistance of the Spirit, and unthankful neglects of grace and glory, are undoubtedly the cause. But are they not a cause that mercy can forgive, that grace can overcome? And may I not yet hope for such a victory before I die?

Lord, I will lie at thy doors and groan: I will pour out my moans before thee. I will beg, and whatever thou wilt, do thou with me. Thou describest the kindness of the dogs to a Lazarus that lay at a rich man's door in sores: thou commendest the neighborly pity of a Samaritan, that took care of a wounded man: thou condemnest those that wilt not show mercy to the poor and needy: thou biddest us be

merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful. If we see our brother have need, and shut up the bowels of our compassion from him, it is because thy love dwelleth not in us : and shall I wait, then, at thy doors in vain, and go empty away from such a God ; when I beg but for that which thou hast commanded me to ask, and without which I cannot serve thee or come to thee, live or die in a habit befitting a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of heaven ? O give me the wedding garment, without which I shall but dishonor thy bounteous feast. Let me wear a livery which becometh thy family, even a child of God. How oft hast thou commanded me to rejoice ; yea, to rejoice with exceeding and unspeakable joy ; and how fain would I in this obey thee. O that I had more faithfully obeyed thee in other preparatory duties, in ruling my senses, my fancy, my tongue, and in diligent using all thy talents ! Then I might more easily have obeyed thee in this. Thou knowest, Lord, that love and joy are duties that must have more than a command. O bid me do them with an effecting word. How can I rejoice in death and darkness ? When the bridegroom is absent I must fast and mourn. While I look towards heaven but through the crevices of this dungeon flesh, my love and joy will be but answerable to my light. How long is it since I hoped that I had been translated from the kingdom of darkness, and delivered from the power of the Prince of Darkness, and brought into that light which is the entrance of the inheritance of saints. And yet, alas ! darkness, darkness is still my misery. There is light round about me, in thy word and works, but darkness is within me : and if my eye be dark, the sun will be no sun to me. Alas ! my Lord, it is not all the learning in the world ; no, not of theology, that consisteth in the knowledge of words and methods, which I can take for the satisfactory, heavenly light. To know what thou hast written in the sacred book, is not enough to make me know my glorified Savior, my Father, and my home. It must be a light from heaven that must show me heaven, and a light accompanied with vital heat that must turn to love and joy within me. O let me not have only dreaming knowledge of words and signs, but quickening light, to show the things which these words do signify, to my mind and heart. Surely, the faith by which we must live, must be a living

faith, and must reach further than to words, how true soever. Can faith live in the dark? What is it but an effect of thine illumination? What is my unbelief but the darkness of my soul? Lord Jesus, scatter all these mists! Make thy way, O thou sun of Righteousness, into this benighted mind! O send thine advocate to silence every temptation that is against thy truth and thee; and thine agent to prosecute thy cause against thine enemies and mine, and to be the resident witness of thy verity, and my sonship and salvation. Hearing of thee is not satisfactory to me: it must be the presence and operation of thy light and love, shed abroad by thy Spirit on my heart, that must quiet and content my soul. I confess, with shame, that I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am unworthy to have any glimpse or taste of heaven; but so did many that are now entertained and feasted by thy love in glory.

My Lord, I know that heaven is not far from me: it is not, I believe, one day's or hour's journey to a separated soul. How quick is the communion of my eyes with the sun, that seems far off; and couldst thou not show it me in a moment? Is not faith a seeing grace? It can see the invisible God, the unseen world, the new Jerusalem, the innumerable angels, and the Spirits of the perfected just, if it be animated by thine influx; without which it can do nothing, and is nothing. Thou that oft healedst the blind here in the flesh, didst tell us that it is much more thy work to illuminate souls. It is but forgiving all my sins, and removing this film that sin hath gathered, and my illuminated soul will see thy glory. I know that the veil of flesh must be also rent before I shall see thee with open face, and know my fellow-citizens above as I am known. It is not heaven on earth that I am begging for; but that I may see it from Mount Nebo, and have the bunch of grapes, the pledge and the first fruits, that faith and hope which may kindle love and desire, and make me run my race in patience, and live and die in the joy which beseemeth an heir of heaven.

But if my part on earth must be no greater than yet it is, let it make me the wearier of this dungeon, and groan more fervently to be with thee, and long for the day when all my longing shall be satisfied, and my soul be filled with thy light and love.'

Sect. 24. 2. And, doubtless, as I shall love the angels and saints in heaven, so I shall some way, in subordination to Christ, be a receiver from them. Our love will be mutual; and which way soever I owe duty, I shall expect some answerable return of benefit. The sun shineth upon the stars, as well as upon the earth, and stars on one another. If angels are greatly useful to me here, it is like they will be much more there, where I shall be a more capable receiver. It will be no diminution to Christ's honor, that he there maketh use of my fellow-creatures to my joy, no more than it is here. The whole creation will still be one compaginated frame; and the heavenly society will for ever retain their relation to each other, and their aptitude and disposition to the duties and benefits of those relations. And as we shall be far fitter for them than here we are, so shall we have far more comfort in them. How gloriously will God shine in the glory of the blessed! How delightful will it be to see their perfection, in wisdom, holiness, love, and concord! What voices they use, or what communication, instead of voices, we shall shortly know; but surely there is a blessed harmony of minds, and wills, and practice. All are not equal: but all accord to love and praise their glorious God, and readily to obey him, and perfectly to love each other. There is no jarring, or discordant spirit that is out of tune; no separation or opposition to each other. As God's love in Christ is our full and final happiness, so nature, which hath made us sociable, teacheth us to desire to be loved of each other, but especially by wise and worthy persons. Saints and angels in heaven will love incomparably better than our dearest friends on earth can do, and better than they did themselves when we were on earth; for they will love that best which is best, and where there is most of God appearing; else it were not intellectual love. And therefore they will love us as much better when we come to heaven, as we shall be better. If we go from loving friends on earth, we shall go to them that love us far more. The love of those here doth but pity us in our pains, and go weeping with our carcasses to the grave; but the love of those above will joyfully convoy, or welcome, our souls to their triumphant society. All the holy friends that we thought we had lost, that went before us, we shall find rejoicing there with Christ.

And oh, what a glorious state will be that common uniting, and united love ! If two or three candles joined together make a greater flame and light, what would ten thousand stars united do ? When all the love of angels and saints in full perfection shall be so united, as to make one love, to God that is one, and to one another, who are there all one in Christ ; O what a glorious love will that be ! That love and joy will be the same thing ; and that one universal love will be one universal joy.

Little know we how great a mercy it is to be here commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves ; and much more, to be effectually taught of God so to love one another. And did we all here live in such unfeigned love, we should be like to heaven, as bearing the image of the God of Love ; but, alas ! our societies here are small ; our goodness, which is our amiableness, wofully imperfect and mixed with loathsome sin and discord ; but there, a whole heaven full of blessed spirits will flame forever, in perfect love to God, to Christ, and one another.

Go then, go willingly, O my soul ! Love joineth with light, to draw up thy desires ! Nature inclineth all things unto union : even the lifeless elements have an aggregative motion, by which the parts, when violently separated, do hastily return to their natural adhesion. Art thou a lover of wisdom, and wouldest thou not be united to the wise ? Art thou a lover of holiness, and wouldest thou not be united to the holy, who are made of love ? Art thou a hater of enmity, discord, and divisions, and a lover of unity here on earth, and wouldest thou not be where all the just are one ? It is not an unnatural union to thy loss ; nothing shall be taken from thee by it : thou shalt receive by it more than thou canst contribute ; it shall not be forced against thy will ; it is but a union of minds and wills ; a perfect union of loves. Let not natural or sinful selfishness cause thee to think suspiciously or hardly of it, for it is thy happiness and end. What got the angels that fell to selfishness, from unity ? and what got Adam, that followed them herein ? The further any man goeth from unity, by selfishness, the deeper he falleth into sin and misery from God. And what doth grace but call us back from sin and selfishness, to God's unity again ? Doat not, then, on this dark, divided world. Is

not thy body, while the parts by an uniting soul are kept together, and make one, in a better state, than when it is crumbled into lifeless dust? And doth not death creep on thee by a gradual dissolution? Away, then, from this sandy, incoherent state; the further from the centre, the further from unity. A unity indeed there is of all things; but it is one heavenly life and light and love, which is the true felicitating union.

We dispute here whether the aggregative motion of separated parts (as in *descensu gravium*,) be from a motive principle in the part, or by the attraction of the whole, or by any external impulse. It is like that there is somewhat of all these; but sure the greatest cause is like to do most to the effect. The body of the earth hath more power to attract a clod, or stone, than the intrinsic principle to move it downwards; but intrinsic gravity is also necessary. The superior attractive love and loveliness must do more to draw up this mind to God, than my intrinsic holiness to move it upward; but without this holiness, the soul would not be capable of feeling that attractive influx. Every grace cometh from God, to fit and lead up my soul to God. Faith, therefore, believeth the heavenly state, and love doth, with some delight, desire it, and hope gapeth after it, that I may at last attain it.

They that have pleaded against propriety, and would have all things common in this world, have forgotten that there is a propriety in our present egoity, and natural constitution, which rendereth some accidental propriety necessary to us. Every man hath his own bodily parts, and inherent accidents; and every man must have his own food, his own place, clothing, and acquisitions; his own children, and therefore, his own wife, &c. But that the greatest perfection is most for community, as far as nature is capable of it, God would show us, in making the first receivers of the extraordinary pourings-out of his Spirit, to sell all, and voluntarily make all common, none saying, This or that is my own; which was not done by any constraining law but by the law or power of uniting love: they were first all as of one heart and soul. (Acts iv. 32.)

Take not, then, thy inordinate desire of propriety for thy health, but for thy sickness; cherish it not, and be not afraid to lose it, and

measure not the heavenly felicity by it : spirits are penetrable ; they claim not so much as a propriety of place, as bodies do. It is thy weakness and state of imperfection now which maketh it so desirable to thee that thy house should be thine, and no one's but thine ; thy land be thine, and no one's but thine ; thy clothes, thy books, yea, thy knowledge and grace, be thine, and no one's but thine. How much more excellent a state were it, (if we were here capable of it,) if we could say, that all these are as the common light of the sun, which is mine, and every one's as well as mine ! Why are we so desirous to speak all languages, but that we might understand all men, and be understood of all, and so might make our sentiments as common as is possible ? Whence is it that men are so addicted to talkativeness ; but that nature would make all our thoughts and passions as common as it can ? And why else are learned men so desirous to propagate their learning, and godly men so desirous to make all others wise and godly ? It seemeth one of the greatest calamities of this life, that when a man hath, with the longest and hardest study, attained to much knowledge, he cannot bequeath it, or any part of it, to his heir, or any person when he dieth, but every man must acquire it for himself ; and when God hath sanctified the parents, they cannot communicate their holiness to their children (though God promise to bless them on their account.) Much less can any man make his grace or knowledge common : nature and grace incline us to desire it ; but we cannot do it. For this end we talk, and preach, and write ; for this end we study to be as plain, and convincing, and moving as we can, that we make our knowledge and affections as common to our hearers and readers as we can. And oh, what a blessed work should we take preaching and writing for, if we could make them all know, but what we know, and love what we are persuading them to love ! There would then be no need of schools and universities : a few hours would do more than they do in an age. But, alas ! how rare is it for a father of excellent learning and piety, to have one son like himself, after all his industry !

Is not the heavenly communion, then, desirable, where every man shall have his own, and yet his own be common to all others ? My knowledge shall be my own, and other men's as well as mine ; my

goodness shall be my own and theirs ; my glory and felicity shall be mine and theirs ; and theirs also shall be mine as well as theirs. The knowledge, the goodness, the glory, of all the heavenly society, shall be mine, according to my capacity ; grace is the seed of such a state, which maketh us all one in Christ, (neither Barbarian nor Scythian, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free,) by giving us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to love both our neighbors and ourselves, for Christ, and Christ in all : well might Paul say, all things are yours. But it is here but as in the seed ; the perfect union and communion is hereafter. Earth and heaven must be distinguished ; we must not extend our hopes or pretensions here beyond the capacity of our natures. As perfect holiness and knowledge, so perfect unity and concord, is proper to heaven, and is not here to be expected. The papal pretensions of an impossible union in one governor of all the earth, is the means to hinder that union which is possible. But the state of perfection is the state of perfect union and communion. Hasten then upwards, O my soul, with the ferventest desires, and breathe after that state with the strongest hopes ; where thou shalt not be rich, and see thy neighbors poor about thee, nor be poor, while they are rich ; nor be well while they are sick, or sick while they are well ; but their riches, their health, their joy, will be all thine, and thine will be all theirs, as the common light ; and none will have the less for the participation of the rest ; yea, communion will be part of every one's felicity ; it constituteth the very being of the city of God. This celestial communion of saints in one holy church, above what is here to be attained, is now an article of our belief ; but believing will soon end in seeing and enjoying.

V. *The constitutive reasons from the heavenly life or practice.*

Sect. 1. Seeing and loving will be the heavenly life ; but yet it seemeth that, besides these, there will be executive powers, and therefore, some answerable practice. There are good works in heaven, and far more and better than on earth. For, 1. there will be more vital activity, and, therefore, more exercise for it ; for the power is for action. 2. There will be more love to God and one another ; and love is active. 3. There will be more likeness to God and our

Redeemer, who is communicative, and doth good, as he is good.

4. Our union with Christ, who will be everlastingly beneficent, as well as benevolent, will make us in our places also beneficent. 5. Our communion in the city of God will prove that we shall all bear our part as the members of the body, in contributing to the welfare of the whole, and in the common returns to God.

Sect. 2. But what are the heavenly works we must perfectly know when we come thither? In general we know; 1. That they will be the works of love to God and to his creatures; that is, such as love inclineth us to exercise. 2. And they will be works of obedience to God; that is, such as we shall do to please his will, and because he willeth them to be our duty. 3. They will be useful works to others. 4. They will be pleasant to ourselves, and part of our felicity. 5. And they will carry all to God, our end.

Sect. 3. And somewhat of them is particularly described in the Holy Scriptures: as, 1. We shall in concord with the holy society, or choir, give thanks and praise to God and our Redeemer. (Rev. xix. 5: 1 Pet. iv. 11; Rev. vii. 4, and iv. 7, 11, and v. 13, and vii. 12, and xix. 1; Phil. iv. 20.) Whether there be any voice, or only such spiritual activity and exultation as to man, in flesh, is not to be clearly understood, is not fit for us here to presume to determine: it will be somewhat more high and excellent than our vocal praise and singing is; and of which this beareth some analogical resemblance or signification. As all passions earnestly desire vent and exercise, so specially do our holy affections of love, joy, and admiration of God Almighty. And there is in us a desire of communion with many in such affections and expressions: methinks when we are singing or speaking God's praise in the great assemblies, with joyful and fervent souls, I have the liveliest foretaste of heaven on earth: and I could almost wish that our voices were loud enough to reach through all the world, and unto heaven itself: nor could I ever be offended (as many are) at the organs, and other convenient music, soberly and seasonably used, which excite and help to tune my soul in so holy a work, in which no true assistance is to be despised. No work more comforteth me in my greatest sufferings, none seemeth more congruous and pleasant to me while I wait for death, than

psalms, and words of praise to God ; nor is there any exercise in which I had rather end my life : and should I not then willingly go to the heavenly choir, where God is praised with perfect love, and joy, and harmony ? Had I more of a praising frame of soul, it would make me long more for that life of praise. For I never find myself more willing to be there than when I most joyfully speak or sing God's praise. Though the dead praise not God in the grave, and dust doth not give him thanks ; yet living souls in heaven do joyfully, while their fleshly clothing turns to dust.

Lord, tune my soul to thy praises now, that sweet experience may make me long to be where I shall do it better ! I see where any excellent music is, nature maketh men flock to it ; and they that are but hearers, yet join by a concurrent fancy and delight : surely, if I had once heard the heavenly choir, I should echo to their holy songs, though I could not imitate them ; and I should think it the truest blessedness to be there, and bear my part. My God, the voice of thy comforting Spirit, speaking thy love effectually to my soul, would make such holy music in me, that would incline me to the celestial concert ; and without it all these thoughts and words will be in vain. It is the inward melody of thy Spirit and my conscience, that must tune me to desire the heavenly melody. O speak thy love first to my heart, and then I shall joyfully speak it to my brethren, and shall ambitiously seek that communion of them that praise thee better than sinful, groaning mortals can : and though my sins here make a loathed jar and discord in my songs, I hope my groans for those sins, and their effects, will make no discord : sighs and tears have had the honor to be accepted by thee, who despisest not a contrite soul : but if thy Spirit will sing and speak within me, and help me against the discordant murmurs of my unbelieving heart, and pained flesh, I shall offer thee that which is more suitable to thy love and grace. I confess, Lord, that daily tears and sighs are not unsuitable to the eyes and voice of so great a sinner, who is under thy correcting rod ! What better could I expect when I grieved thy Spirit, than that it should prove my grief ? Yea, this is far better than the genuine effects of sin. But this is not it that is meetest to be offered to the God of love : he that offereth praise doth glorify thee : and is not

this the spiritual sacrifice accepted through Christ, for which we were made priests to God. (1 Pet. ii. 5.) I refuse not, Lord, to lie in tears and groans when thou requirest it ; and do not thou refuse those tears and groans ; but O give me better, that I may have better of thine own to offer thee : and by this prepare me for the far better, which I shall find with Christ : and that which is best to us thy creatures will be accepted as best by thee, who art glorified and pleased in the perfection of thy works.

Sect. 4. It is, at least, very probable that God maketh glorified spirits his agents and ministers of much of his beneficence to the creatures that are below them. For, 1. We see that where he endueth any creature with the noblest endowments, he maketh most use of that creature to the benefit of others : we shall in heaven be most furnished to do good ; and that furniture will not be unused. 2. And Christ tells us that we shall be like, or equal to, the angels ; which though it mean not simply and in all things, yet it meaneth more than to be above carnal generation ; for it speaketh of a similitude of nature and state as the reason of the other. And that the angels are God's ministers for the good of his chosen in this world, and administrators of much of the affairs on earth, is past all doubt. 3. The Apostle telleth us that the saints shall judge the world and angels : and judging in Scripture is oft put for ruling. It is therefore probable, at least, that the devils, and the damned, shall be put under the saints, and that, with the angels, they shall be employed in some ministerial oversight of the inhabitants and affairs of the promised new earth. 4. And when even the more noble superior bodies, even the stars, are of so great use and influx to inferior bodies, it is like that accordingly superior spirits will be of use to the inhabitants of the world below them.

Sect. 5. But I think it not meet to venture here upon uncertain conjectures beyond the revelation of God's word, and therefore shall add no more, but conclude that God knoweth what use to make of us hereafter as well as here, and that if there were no more for us to do in heaven, but with perfect knowledge, love, and joy, to hold communion with God and all the heavenly society, it were enough to attract a sensible and considerate soul to fervent desires to be at home with God.

Sect. 6. And here I must not over-pass my rejection of the injurious opinion of too many philosophers and divines, who exclude all sense and affection from heaven, and acknowledge nothing there but intellect and will: and this is because they find sense and affection in the brutes; and they think that the souls of brutes are but some quality, or perishing temperament of matter; and, therefore, that sense and affection is in us no better.

Sect. 7. But, 1. What felicity can we conceive of without any affection of delight or joy: certainly bare volition now without these doth seem to be no felicity to us; nor knowledge neither, if there were no delight in knowing.

Sect. 8. 2. Yea, I leave it to men's experience to judge, whether there be now any such thing in us as proper willing, which is not also some internal sense of, and affection to, the good which we will: if it be complacency or the pleasedness of the will, this signifies some pleasure; and love, in the first act, is nothing else but such an appetite: if it be desire, it hath in it a pleasedness in the thing desired, as in *esse cognito*, as it is thought on by us; and what is love without all sense and affection?

Sect. 9. 3. Why doth the Scripture ascribe love and joy to God and angels if there were not some reason for it? Doubtless there is great difference between the heavenly love and joy, and ours here in the body: and so there is also between their knowledge and ours, and their will and ours: but it is not that theirs is less or lower than ours, but somewhat more excellent, which ours giveth us some analogical, or imperfect, formal notion of.

Sect. 10. 4. And what though brutes have sense and affection, doth it therefore follow that we have none now? or that we shall have none hereafter? Brutes have life: and must we therefore have no life hereafter, because it is a thing that is common to brutes? Rather, as now we have all that the brutes have, and more, so shall we then have life, and sense, and affection of a nobler sort than brutes, and more. Is not God the living God? Shall we say that he liveth not because brutes live? or rather, that they live a sensitive life, and man a sensitive and intellectual, because God is essential, transcendent, infinite life, that makes them live.

Sect. 11. 5. **But** if they say that there is no sensation or affection but by bodily organs, I answered before to that : the body feeleth nothing at all, but the soul in the body ; the soul uniteth itself most nearly to the igneous aërial parts, called the spirits ; and in them it feeleth, seeth, tasteth, smelleth, &c. And that soul that feeleth and seeth, doth also inwardly love, desire, and rejoice ; and that soul which doth this in the body, hath the same power and faculty out of the body : and if they judge by the cessation of sensation, when the organs are undisposed, or dead, so they might as well conclude against our future intellection and will, whose operation in an apoplexy we no more perceive than that of sense. **But** I have before showed that the soul will not want exercise for its essential faculties, for want of objects, or bodily organs ; and that men conclude basely of the souls of brutes, as if they were not an enduring substance, without any proof or probability : and tell us idle dreams, that they are but vanishing temperaments, &c., which are founded on another dream, that fire (or the motive, illuminative, calefactive cause) is no substance neither ; and so our unnatural somatists know none of the most excellent substances, which actuate all the rest, but only the more base and gross, which are actuated by them : and they think they have well acquitted themselves, by telling us of subtle, active matter and motion, without understanding what any living, active, motive, faculty, or virtue is. And because no man knoweth what God doth with the souls of brutes, (whether they are only one common sensitive soul of a more common body, or whether individuate still, and transmigrant from body to body, or what else ;) therefore they make ignorance a plea for error, and feign them to be no substances, or to be annihilated.

Sect. 12. I doubt not but sensation (as is aforesaid) is an excellent operation of the essential faculties of real substances, called spirits ; and that the highest and noblest creatures have it in the highest excellency : and though God, that fitteth every thing to its use, hath given, *e. g.* a dog more perfect sense of smelling than a man, yet man's internal sense is far more excellent than the brutes, and thereby is an advantage to our intellection, volition, and joy here in the flesh : and that in heaven we shall have not less, but more, even more excel-

lent sense and affections of love and joy, as well as more excellent intellection and volition ; but such as we cannot now clearly conceive of.

Sect. 13. Therefore there is great reason for all those analogical collections which I have mentioned in my book called 'The Saint's Rest' from the present operations and pleasures of the soul in flesh, to help our conceptions of its future pleasures : and though we cannot conclude that they will not inconceivably differ in their manner from what we now feel, I doubt not but feel and rejoice we shall, as certainly as live, and that the soul is essential life, and that our life, and feeling, and joy, will be inconceivably better.

The concluding application.

Sect. 1. I am convinced that it is far better to depart and be with Christ, than to be here : but there is much more than such conviction necessary to bring up my soul to such desires. Still there resisteth, I. The natural averseness to death, which God hath put into every animal, and which is become inordinate and too strong by sin. II. The remnants of unbelief, taking advantage of our darkness here in the flesh, and our too much familiarity with this visible world. III. The want of more lively foretastes in a heavenly mind and love, through weakness of grace, and the fear of guilt. These stand up against all that is said ; and words will not overcome them : what then must be done ? Is there no remedy ?

Sect. 2. There is a special sort of the teaching of God, by which we must learn "so to number our days as to apply our hearts to wisdom ;" without which we shall never, effectually, practically, and savingly, learn either this or any the most common, obvious, and easy lesson. When we have read and heard, and spoken, and written, the soundest truth and certainest arguments, we know yet as if we knew not, and believe as if we believed not, with a slight and dreaming kind of apprehension, till God, by a special illumination, bring the same things clearly to our minds, and awaken the soul by a special suscitation, to feel what we know, and suit the soul to the truth revealed by an influx of his love, which giveth us a pleasing sense of the amiableness and congruity of the things proposed. Since we separated ourselves from God, there is a hedge of separation between our senses and our understandings, and between our understandings

and our wills and affections, so that the communion between them is violated, and we are divided in ourselves by this schism in our faculties. All men still see the demonstrations of divine perfections in the world, and every part thereof; and yet how little is God known. All men may easily know that there is a God, who is almighty, omniscient, goodness itself, eternal, omnipresent, the *Maker, Preserver,* and Governor of all, who should have our whole trust, and love, and obedience; and yet how little of this knowledge is to be perceived in men's hearts to themselves, or in their lives to others. All men know that the world is vanity, that men must die, that riches then profit not, that time is precious, and that we have only this little time to prepare for that which we must receive hereafter; and yet how little do men seem to know, indeed, of all such things as no man doubts of. And when God doth come in with his powerful awakening light and love, then all these things have another appearance of affecting reality than they had before; as if but now we began to know them; words, doctrines, persons, things, do seem as newly known to us.

All my best reasons for our immortality and future life are but as the new-formed body of Adam, before God breathed into him the breath of life. It is he that must make them living reasons. To the Father of Lights, therefore, I must still look up, and for his light and love I must still wait, as for his blessing on the food which I have eaten, which must concoct it into my living substance. Arguments will be but undigested food, till God's effectual influx do digest them. I must learn both as a student and a beggar; when I have thought, and thought a thousand times, I must beg thy blessing, Lord, upon my thoughts, or they will all be but dulness, or self-distraction. If there be no motion, light, and life here, without the influx of the sun, what can souls do, or receive, or feel, without thy influx. This world will be to us, without thy grace, as a grave or dungeon, where we shall lie in death and darkness. The eye of my understanding, and all its thoughts, will be useless or vexatious to me, without thine illuminating beams. O shine the soul of thy servant into a clearer knowledge of thyself and kingdom, and love him into more divine and heavenly love, and then he will willingly come to thee.

Sect. 3. I. And why should I strive, by the fears of death, against the common course of nature, and against my only hopes of happiness? Is it not appointed for all men once to die? Would I have God to alter this determinate course, and make sinful man immortal upon earth? When we are sinless, we shall be immortal. The love of life was given to teach me to preserve it carefully, and use it well, and not to torment me with the continual, troubling foresight of death. Shall I make myself more miserable than the vegetatives and brutes? Neither they nor I do grieve that my flowers must fade and die, and that my sweet and pleasant fruits must fall, and the trees be unclothed of their beauteous leaves, until the spring. Birds, and beasts, and fishes, and worms, have all a self-preserving fear of death, which urgeth them to fly from danger; but few, if any of them, have a tormenting fear arising from the forethoughts that they must die. To the body, death is less troublesome than sleep; for in sleep I may have disquieting pains or dreams; and yet I fear not going to my bed. But of this before.

If it be the misery after death that is feared, oh! what have I now to do, but to receive the free, reconciling grace that is offered me from heaven, to save me from such misery, and to devote myself totally to him who hath promised that those that come to him he will in nowise cast out.

Sect. 4. But this cometh by my selfishness. Had I studied my duty, and then remembered that I am not mine own, and that it is God's part, and not mine, to determine of the duration of my life, I had been quiet from these fruitless fears. But when I fell to myself, from God, I am fallen to care for myself, as if it were my work to measure out my days: and now I trust not God as I should do with his own. And had my resignation and devotedness to him been more absolute, my trust in him would have been more easy. But, Lord, thou knowest that I would fain be thine, and wholly thine; and it is to thee that I desire to live; therefore let me quietly die to thee, and wholly trust thee with my soul.

Sect. 5. II. And why should my want of formal conceptions of the future state of separated souls, and my strangeness to the manner of their subsistence and operations, induce me to doubt of those

generals, which are evident, and beyond all rational doubting? That souls are substances and not annihilated, and essentially the same, when they forsake the body, as before, I doubt not. Otherwise neither the Christian's resurrection, nor the Pythagorean's transmigration, were a possible thing. For if the soul cease to be, it cannot pass into another body, nor can it re-enter into this. If God raise this body, then it must be by another soul. For the same soul to be annihilated, and yet to begin again to be, is a contradiction; for the second beginning would be by creation, which maketh a new soul, and not the same that was before. It is the invisible things that are excellent, active, operative, and permanent. The visible (excepting light, which maketh all things else visible) are of themselves but lifeless dross. It is the unseen part of plants and flowers which causeth all their growth and beauty, their fruit and sweetness. Passive matter is but moved up and down by the invisible active powers, as chess-men are moved from place to place by the gamester's hands. What a loathsome corpse were the world, without the invisible spirits and natures that animate, actuate, or move it. To doubt of the being or continuation of the most excellent, spiritual parts of the creation, when we live in a world that is actuated by them, and where every thing demonstrates them, as their effects, is more foolish than to doubt of the being of these gross materials which we see.

Sect. 6. How oft have I been convinced that there are good spirits with whom our souls have as certain communion, though not so sensible, as our life hath with the sun, and we have with one another. And that there are evil and envious spirits that fight against our holiness and peace, as certain narratives of apparitions and witches, and too sad experience of temptations, do evince. And the marvellous diversity of creatures on earth, for kind and number; yea, the diversity of stars in heaven, as well as the diversities of angels and devils, do partly tell me, that though all be of one, and through one, and to one, yet absolute unity is the divine prerogative, and we must not presume to expect such perfection as to lose our specific or numerical diversity, by any union which shall befall our souls. Nor can I reasonably doubt that so noble and active a nature as souls dwelling above in the lucid regions, in communion with their like, and

with their betters, shall be without the activity, the pleasure and felicity, which is suitable to their nature, their region and their company. And my Savior hath entered into the holiest, and hath assured me that there are many mansions in his Father's house; and that when we are absent from the body we shall be present with the Lord.

Sect. 7. Organical sight is given me for my use here in the body; and a serpent, or hawk, hath as much or more of this than I have. Mental knowledge reacheth further than sight, and is the act of a nobler faculty, and for a higher use. Though it be the soul itself embodied in the igneous spirits that seeth, yet it is by a higher and more useful faculty that it understandeth; and faith is not an understanding act; it knoweth things unseen, because they are revealed. Who can think that all believing, holy souls, that have passed hence from the beginning of the world, have been deceived in their faith and hope? And that all the wicked, worldly infidels, whose hope was only in this life, have been the wisest men, and have been in the right? If virtue and piety are faults or follies, and brutish sensuality be best, then why are not laws made to command sensuality, and forbid piety and virtue? To say this, is to deny humanity, and the wisdom of our Creator, and to feign the world to be governed by a lie, and to take the perfection of our nature for its disease, and our greatest disease for our perfection. But if piety and virtue be better than impiety and vice, the principles and necessary motives of them are certainly true, and the exercise of them is not in vain. What abominable folly and wickedness were it to say that the wicked only attain their ends, and that they all lose their labor, and live and die in miserable deceit, who seek to please God in hope of a better life to come, believing that God is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Would not this justify the foolish Manichees, that thought a bad God made this world; yea, and would infer that he not only made us for a mischief, but ruleth us to our deceit and hurt, and giveth us both natural and supernatural laws, in ill-will to us, to mislead us to our misery, and to fill our lives with needless troubles. Shall I not abhor every suggestion that containeth such inhuman absurdities as these? Wonderful, that Satan can keep up so much

unbelief in the world, while he must make men such fools, that he may make them unbelievers and ungodly.

Sect. 8. III. That my soul is no more heavenly, and my foretaste of future blessedness is so small, is partly the fruit of those many wilful sins by which I have quenched the Spirit that should be my comforter : and it is partly from our common state of darkness and strangeness, while the soul is in the flesh, and operateth as the body's form, according to its interest and capacity. Affections are more easily stirred up to things seen, than to things that are both unseen, and known only very defectively, by general, and not by clear, distinct apprehensions. And yet this, O this, is the misery and burden of my soul ! Though I can say that I love God's truth and graces, his work, and his servants, and whatever of God I see in the world, and that this is a love of God in his creatures, word, and works ; yet that I have no more desiring and delightful love of heaven, where his loveliness will be more fully opened to my soul, and that the thoughts of my speedy appearing there are no more joyful to me than they are, is my sin, and my calamity and my shame. And if I did not see that it is so with other of the servants of Christ, as well as with me, I should doubt whether affections, so unproportionable to my profession, did not signify unsoundness in my belief. It is strange and shameful, that one that expecteth quickly to see the glorious world, and to enter the holy, celestial society, should be no more joyfully affected with these hopes, and that I should make any great matter of the pain, and languishing, and perishing of the flesh, when it is the common way to such an end. O hateful sin ! that hath so darkened and corrupted souls as to estrange and indispose them to the only state of their hoped happiness. Alas ! what did man, when he forsook the love and obedience of his God ? How just it is, that this flesh and world should become our prison, which we would make our home, and would not use as our Lord appointed us, as our servant and way to our better state. Though our way must not be our home, our Father would not have been so strange to us in the way, if we had not unthankfully turned away from his grace and love.

Sect. 9. It is to us that know not the mysteries of infinite wisdom, the saddest thought that ever doth possess our minds, to consider that

there is no more grace and holiness, knowledge of God, and communion with him in this world. That so few are saints, and those few so lamentably defective and imperfect. That when the sun shineth on all the earth, the Sun of Righteousness shineth on so small a part of it, and so few live in the love of God, and the joyful hopes of future blessedness ; and those few have so low a measure of it, and are corrupted and troubled with so many contrary affections. Infinite goodness is not undisposed to do good. He that made us capable of holy and heavenly affections, gave us not that capacity in vain ; and yet, alas ! how little of God and glory taketh up the hearts of men.

But man hath no cause to grudge at God. The devils, before their fall, were not made indefectible ; divine wisdom is delighted in the diversity of his works and maketh them not all of equal excellency. Free will was to act its part ; hell is not to be as good as heaven : and sin hath made earth to be next to hell : so much sin, so much hell. What is sin but a wilful forsaking of God ? And can we forsake him, and yet love him, and enjoy his love ? God's kingdom is not to be judged of by his gaol or gibbets. We wilfully forsook the light, and made the world a dungeon to ourselves. And, when recovering light doth shine unto us, how unthankfully do we usually entertain it ? We cannot have the conduct and comfort of it while we shut our eyes, and turn away. And what though God give not all men an overcoming measure, nor to the best so much as they desire : the earth is but a spot, or print, of God's creation ; not so much as an ant hillock to a kingdom, or, perhaps, to all the earth. And who is scandalised because the world hath an heap of ants in it, yea, or a nest of snakes, that are not men ? The vast, unmeasurable worlds of light which are above us, are possessed by inhabitants suitable to their glory. A casement, or crevice of light, or a candle, in this darksome world, is an unspeakable mercy ; yea, that we may but hear of a better world, and may seek it in hope. We must not grudge that in our prison we have not that presence of our King, and pleasures of the kingdom, as innocent and free subjects have : hope of pardon, and a speedy deliverance, are great mercies to malefactors.

Sect. 10. And if my want of the knowledge and love of God, and joyful communion with the heavenly society, be my prison, and as the suburbs of hell, should it not make me long for the day of my redemption, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God? My true desires of deliverance, and of holiness and perfection, are my evidences that I shall obtain them. As the will is the sinner, so it is the obstinate continuance of a will to sin, which is the bondage, and the cause of continued sin: and a continued hell is continued sin, as to the first part at least. Therefore, they that continue in hell, do continue in a sinning will, and so continue in a love and willingness of so much of hell. So far as God maketh us willing to be delivered from sin, so far we are delivered; and our initial, imperfect deliverance is the way to more. If pains, then, make me groan for ease, and sickness make me wish for health, why should not my remnants of ignorance, unbelief, and strangeness to God, occasion me to long for the day of my salvation? This is the greatest of all my troubles; and should it not, then, be the greatest wearying burden from which I should earnestly desire to be eased? As grace never doth hurt efficiently, and yet may be ill used, and do hurt objectively, (as to them that are proud of it,) so sin never doth good efficiently, and of itself, and yet objectively may do good; for sin may be the object of grace, and so to use it is not sin. My unbelief, and darkness, and disaffection, and inordinate love of this life, do, of themselves, most hinder my desires of deliverance, and of a better life; but, objectively, what more fit to make me weary of such a grievous state? Were my unbelief and earthly mind predominant, they would chain my affections to this world; or if I were constrainedly weary of a miserable life, I should have no comfortable hopes of a better. But as it is the nature of my sin to draw down my heart from God and glory, it is the nature of my faith, and hope, and love, to carry it upward and to desire the heavenly perfection: not to love death, but to love that which is beyond it. And have I been so many years in the school of Christ, learning both how to live and die, begging and studying for this grace, and exercising it against this sinful flesh, and shall I now, after all, find flesh more powerful to draw me downward, than faith, hope, and love, to carry my desires up to God?

Sect. 11. O God forbid! O thou that freely gavest me thy grace, maintain it to the last against its enemies, and make it finally victorious! It came from thee; it hath been preserved by thee; it is on thy side, and wholly for thee. O let it not now fail, and be conquered by blind and base carnality, or by the temptations of a hellish, conquered enemy; without it I had lived as a beast, and without it I should die more miserably than a beast. It is thine image which thou lovest; it is a divine nature and heavenly beam. What will a soul be without it, but a dungeon of darkness, a devil for malignity, and dead to holiness and heaven? Without it, who shall plead thy cause against the devil, world, and flesh? Without thy glory, earth is but earth: without thy natural efficacy, it would be nothing: without thy wise and potent ordination it would be but a chaos: and, without thy grace, it would be a hell. O rather deny me the light of the sun, than the light of thy countenance! Less miserable had I been without life or being, than without thy grace. Without thee, and my Savior's help, I can do nothing; I did not live without thee; I could not pray or learn without thee; I never could conquer a temptation without thee; and can I die, or be prepared to die, without thee? Alas! I shall but say as Philip of Christ, "I know not whither my soul is going, and how then shall I know the way?" My Lord having loved his own in the world, did love them to the end. Thou lovest fidelity and perseverance in thy servants; even those that in his sufferings forsook him and fled, yet are commended and rewarded by Christ, for continuing with him in his temptations. (Luke xxii. 28.) And wilt thou forsake a sinner in his extremity, who consenteth to thy covenant, and would not forsake thee? My God, I have often sinned against thee, but yet thou knowest I would fain be thine: I have not served thee with the resolution, fidelity, and delight, as such a master should have been served, but yet I would not forsake thy service, nor change my master, or my work. I can say, with thy servant Paul, that thou art the God whose I am, and whom I serve: (Acts. xxvii. 23.) and O that I could serve thee better! For to serve thee is but to receive thy grace, and to use it for my own and others' good, and so to glorify thee, and please thy will, which, being love itself, is best pleased when we receive and

do most good. I have not loved thee as infinite goodness, and love itself, and fatherly bounty, should have been loved; but yet I would not forsake thy family. And nothing in this world is more my grief, than that I love thee no more. Forsake not, then, a sinner that would not forsake thee, that looketh every hour towards thee, that feeleth it as a piece of hell to be so dark and strange unto thee, that gropeth, and groaneth, and gaspeth after thee; feeling, to his greatest sorrow, (though thou art every where,) that while he is present in the body, he is absent from the Lord. My Lord, I have nothing to do in this world, but to seek and serve thee. I have nothing to do with a heart and its affections, but to breathe after thee: I have nothing to do with my tongue and pen, but to speak to thee, and for thee, and to publish thy glory, and thy will. What have I to do with all my reputation, and interest in my friends, but to increase thy church, and propagate thy holy truth and service? What have I to do with my remaining time, even these last and languishing hours, but to look up unto thee, and wait for thy grace, and thy salvation? O pardon all my carnal thoughts, and all my unthankful neglects of thy precious grace, and love, and all my wilful sin against thy truth and thee; and let the fuller communications of thy forfeited grace, now tell me by experience that thou dost forgive me! Even under the terrible law thou didst tell man thy very nature, by proclaiming thy name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.) And is not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed in the gospel for our more abundant faith and consolation? My God, I know as I cannot love thee according to thy loveliness, so I cannot trust thee according to thy faithfulness: I can never be sufficiently confident of thy all-sufficient power, thy wisdom, and thy goodness. When I have said, as Psalm lxxvii. 7, "Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail to generations? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Conscience hath replied, that this is my infirmity; I never wanted comfort, because thou wantedst mercy; but because I

wanted faith and fitness to receive it, and perceive it. But hast thou not mercy also to give me, even that fitness, and that faith? My God, all is of thee, and through thee, and all is to thee, and when I have the felicity, the glory of all for ever will be thine. None that trusteth in thee, (according to thy nature and promise,) shall be ashamed. If I can live and die in trusting in thee, surely I shall not be confounded.

Sect. 12. Why, then should it seem a difficult question, how I may, willingly, leave this world, and my soul depart to Christ in peace? The same grace which regenerated me, must bring me to my desired end, as the same principle of vegetation which causeth the end, must bring the fruit to sweet maturity, I. Believe and trust thy Father, thy Savior, and thy Comforter. II. And hope for the joyful entertainments of his love, and for the blessed state which he hath promised. III. And long, by love, for nearer union and communion with him; and thus, O my soul, thou mayest depart in peace.

I. How sure is the promise of God! How suitable to his love, and to the nature of our souls, and to the operations of every grace? It is initially performed here, whilst our desires are turned towards him, and the heavenly seed and spark is here ingenerated in a soul that was dead and dark, and disaffected. Is it any strange thing for fire to ascend? yea, or the fiery principle of vegetation in a tree, to carry up the earthy matter to a great height? Is it strange that rivers should hasten to the sea? Whither should spirits go, but to the region or world of spirits? And whither should Christ's members, and holy spirits go but to himself, and the heavenly society? And is not that a more holy and glorious place and state than this below? Earth is between heaven and hell; a place of gross and passive matter, where spirits may, indeed, operate upon that which needeth them, and where they may be detained awhile in such operation, or as incorporated forms, if not incarcerated delinquents; but it is not their center, end, or home. Even sight and reason might persuade me, that all the noble, invisible powers, that operate on this lower world, do principally belong unto a higher; and what can earth add to their essence, dignity, or perfection?

Sect. 13. But why, O my soul, art thou so vainly solicitous to have formal, clear, distinct conceptions of the celestial world, and the individuation and operations of separated souls, any more than of the angels? While thou art the formal principle of an animated body, thy conceptions must be suitable to their present state and use. When thou art possessed of a better state, thou shalt know it as a possessor ought to do ; for such a knowledge as thou lookest after, is part of the possession, and to long to know and love, in clearness and perfection, is to long to possess. It is thy Savior, and his glorified ones, that are comprehensors, and possessors ; and it is his knowledge which must now be most of thy satisfaction. To seek his prerogative to thyself, is vain, usurping arrogance. Wouldest thou be a God and Savior to thyself? Oh, consider how much of the fall is in this selfish care and desire to be as God, in knowing that of good and evil which belongeth not to thee, but to God, to know. Thou knowest, past doubt, that there is a God of infinite perfection, who is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Labor more to know thy duty to this God, and absolutely trust him, as to the particularities of thy felicity and reward. Thou didst trust thy parents to provide thee food and raiment, when thou didst but dutifully obey them ; though they could have forsaken thee, or killed thee every hour, thou didst never fear it. Thou hast trusted physicians to give thee even ungrateful medicines, without inquiring after every ingredient, or fearing lest they should wilfully give thee poison. I trust a barber with my throat : I trust a boatman or shipmaster, with my life ; yea, my horse, that might cast me ; because I have no reason to distrust them, saving their insufficiency and uncertainty, as creatures. If a pilot undertake to bring thee to the Indies, thou canst trust his conduct, though thou know thyself neither the ship, nor how to govern it ; neither the way nor the place to which thou art conveyed. And must not thy God and Savior be trusted to bring thee safe to heaven, unless he will satisfy all thy inquiries of the individuation and operation of spirits? Leave unsearchable and useless questions to him that can easily resolve them, and to those to whom the knowledge of them doth belong. Thou dost but entangle thyself in sin and self-vexation, while thou wouldest take God's work upon thee, and wouldest

know that for thyself, which he must know for thee. Thy knowledge and care for it did not precede, nor prepare for, thy generation, nor for the motion of one pulse or breath, or for the concoction of one bit of all thy food, or the continuance of thy life one hour; supposing but thy care to use the means which God appointed thee, and to avoid things hurtful, and to beg his blessing. The command of being careful for nothing, and casting all thy care on God, who careth for us, obligeth us in all things that are God's part; and for our souls as well as for our bodies: yea, to trust him with the greatest of our concerns is our greatest duty; supposing we be careful about our own part, viz, to use the means, and obey his precepts. To dispose of a departing soul is God's part, and not ours: oh! how much evil is in this distrustful, self-providing care! If I did but know what I would know about my soul and myself; and if I might but choose what condition it should be in, and be the final disposer of it myself, O what satisfaction and joy would it afford me! And is not this to be partly a God to myself! Is he not fitter to know, and choose, and dispose of me, than I am? I could trust myself easily, even my wit and will, in such a choice, if I had but power; and cannot I trust God and my Redeemer, without all this care, and fear, and trouble, and all these particular inquiries? If you are convoying your child in a boat, or coach, by water, or by land, and he at every turn be crying out, 'O father, whither do we go! or, 'what shall I do?' or 'I shall be drowned, or fall:'—is it not rather his trust in you, than the particular satisfaction of his ignorant doubts, that must quiet and silence him? Be not, then, foolishly distrustful and inquisitive. Make not thyself thy own disquieter or tormentor, by an inordinate care of thy own security. Be not cast down, O departing soul, nor, by unbelief disquieted within me. Trust in God, for thou shalt quickly, by experience, be taught to give him thanks and praise, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Sect. 14. O, what clear reason, what great experience, do command me to trust him, absolutely and implicitly to trust him, and to distrust myself!

1. He is essential, infinite, perfection, power, wisdom, and love. There is in him all that should invite and encourage rational trust, and nothing that should discourage it.

2. There is nothing in any creature to be trusted, but God in that creature, or God working in and by it. Distrust him, and there is nothing to be trusted. Not the earth to bear me, nor the air to breathe in, much less any mutable friend.

3. I am altogether his own, his own by right, and his own by devotion and consent. And shall I not trust him with his own.

4. He is the great benefactor of all the world, that giveth all good to every creature, not by constraint, or by commutation, but as freely as the sun giveth forth its light. And shall we not trust the sun to shine?

5. He is my Father and special benefactor, and hath taken me into his family as his child. And shall I not trust my heavenly Father?


6. He hath given me his Son as the great pledge of his love, and what, then, will he think too dear for me? Will he not with him give me all things? (Rom. viii. 32.)

7. His Son came purposely to reveal the Father's unspeakable love, and purposely to save us. And shall I not trust him that hath proclaimed his love and reconciliation by such a messenger from heaven?

8. He hath given me the Spirit of his Son, even the spirit of adoption, which is the surest character of his child, the witness, pledge, and earnest of heaven, the name and mark of God upon me, holiness to the Lord. And yet shall I not believe his love, and trust him?

9. He hath made me a member of his Son, and so far already united me to him. And will he not take care of the members of his Son? Will he lose those that are given him? Is not Christ to be trusted with his members?

10. I am his interest, and the interest of his son. Freely beloved; dearly bought! for whom so much is suffered and done, that he is pleased to call us his peculiar treasure. And may I not trust him with his dear-bought treasure?



11. He hath stated me in a relation to angels, who rejoiced at my repentance, and to the heavenly society, which shall not miss the smallest part. Angels shall not lose their joy, nor ministration.

12. He is in covenant with me ; even the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He hath given me many great and precious promises, and shall I fear lest he will break his word or covenant ?

13. My Savior is the forerunner, entered into the holiest, and there appearing and interceding for me. And this after he had conquered death, and risen again to assure me of a future life, and ascended into heaven, to show us whither we must ascend ; and that after these comfortable words, " Say to my brethren, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God." (John, xx. 17.) And shall I not follow him through death, and trust such a Guide and Captain of my salvation ?

14. He is there to prepare a place for me, and will take me to himself. And may I not confidently expect it ?

15. He told a malefactor on the cross, that he should be that day with him in paradise, to tell believing sinners what they may expect.

16. The church, by the article of his descent into hell, hath signified their common belief that his separated soul had its subsistence and operation, and did not sleep or perish, to tell us the immortality of separated souls.

17. His apostles, and other servants, have on earth served him with all these expectations.

18. The spirits of the perfected just are now in possession of what I hope for. And I am a follower of them who, by faith and patience, have attained the promised felicity. And may I not trust him to save me, who hath already saved millions in this way, when I could trust a ferryman to pass me over a river, that had safely passed over thousands before me ? or I could trust a physician who cureth all that he undertaketh of the same disease.

19. I must be at his disposal whether I will or not. I shall live while he will, and die when he will, and go whither he will. I may sin, and vex my soul with fears, and cares, and sorrows, but I shall never prevail against his will.

20. Therefore, there is no rest for souls but in the will of God. That will created us, and that will did govern us, and that will shall be fulfilled on us. It was our efficient and our regent cause, and it shall be our end. Where else is it that we should rest? in the will of men, or angels, or in our own wills? All creatures are but creatures, and our own wills have undone us; they have misgoverned us, and they are our greatest enemies; our disease, our prison, and our death, till they are brought over to the will of God. Till then they are like a foot out of joint; like a child or subject in rebellion. There is no rectitude or health, no order, no peace or true felicity, but in the conformity of our wills to the will of God. And shall I die in distrustful striving against his will, and desiring to keep up my own before it?

21. What abundant experience have I had of God's fidelity and love? And after all this shall I not trust him? His undeserved mercy gave me being; it chose my parents; it gave them a tender love to me, and desire of my good; it taught them to instruct me early in his word, and to educate me in his fear; it chose me suitable company and habitation; it gave me betimes a teachable ingeny; it chose my schoolmasters; it brought to my hands many excellent and suitable books; it gave me some profitable public teachers; it placed me in the best of lands on earth, and I think in the best of ages which that land had seen; it did early destroy all great expectations and desires of the world, teaching me to bear the yoke from my youth, and causing me rather to groan under my infirmities, than to fight with strong and potent lusts; it chastened me betimes, but did not destroy me. Great mercy hath trained me up all my days, since I was nineteen years of age, in the school of affliction, to keep my sluggish soul awake in the constant expectations of my change, and to kill my pride and overvaluing of this world, and to lead all my studies to the most necessary things, and as a spur to excite my soul to seriousness, and especially to save me from the supine neglect and loss of time. Oh! what unspeakable mercy hath a life of constant but gentle chastisement proved to me! It urged me, against all dull delays, to make my calling and election sure, and to make ready my accounts, as one that must quickly give them up to

God. The face of death, and nearness of eternity, did much convince me what books to read, what studies to prefer and prosecute, what company and conversation to choose. It drove me early into the vineyard of the Lord, and taught me to preach as a dying man to dying men. It was divine love and ^{his} mercy which made sacred truth so pleasant to me, that my life hath been (under all my infirmities) almost a constant recreation and delight, in its discoveries, contemplation and practical use : how happy a teacher have I had ! What excellent help, and sweet illumination ! How far beyond my expectation hath divine mercy encouraged me in his sacred work ! How congruously did he choose every place of my ministration and habitation to this day, without my own forecast or seeking ! When, and where, since he first sent me forth, did I labor in vain ? How many are gone to heaven, and how many are in the way, to whom he hath blessed the word, which, in weakness I did, by his grace and providence, deliver ! Many good Christians are glad of now and then an hour's time to meditate on God's word, and recreate themselves in his holy worship ; but God hath allowed and called me to make it the constant business of my life. My library hath offered me both profitable and pleasant company and help, at all times, whenever I would use them. I have dwelt among the shining lights which the learned, wise, and holy men of all ages have set up, and left to illuminate the world. How many comfortable hours have I had in the society of living saints, and in the love of faithful friends. How many joyful days have I had in the solemn assemblies, where God hath been worshipped in seriousness and alacrity, by concordant (though imperfect) saints ; where the spirit of Christ hath manifested his presence, by helping myself and my brethren in speaking, and the people in ready, delightful hearing, and all of us in loving and gladly receiving his doctrine, covenant, and laws. How unworthy was such a sinful worm as I (who never had any academical helps, nor much from the mouth of any teacher), that books should become so great a blessing to me ; and that, quite beyond my own intentions, God should induce or constrain me to provide any such like helps for others ! How unworthy was I to be kept from the multiplied snares of sects and errors which reigned in this age, and

to be used as a means for other men's preservation and reduction ; and to be kept in a love of unity and peace ; how unworthy was I that God should make known to me so much of his reconciling truth, while extremes did round about prevail, and were commended to the churches by the advantage of piety on one side, and of worldly prosperity and power on the other : and that God should use me above forty years in so comfortably a work as to plead and write for love, peace, and concord, and to vouchsafe me so much success therein as he hath done, notwithstanding the general prevalency of the contentious military tribe. Mercy I have had in peace, and liberty in times of violence ; and mercy I have had in wars, living two years in safety in a city of defence, in the very midst of the land (Coventry), and seeing no enemy while the kingdom was in wars and flames ; and only hearing of the common calamities round about : and when I went abroad and saw the effects of human folly and fury, and of God's displeasure, he mercifully kept me from hurting any one, and being hurt by any ; how many a time hath he preserved me by day and night, in difficulties and dangers, from the malice of Satan, and from the wrath of man, and from accidents which threatened sudden death. While I beheld the ruins of towns and countries, and the fields covered with the carcasses of the slain, I was preserved, and returned home in peace. And oh, how great was the mercy he showed me, in a teachable, tractable, peaceable, humble, unanimous people ! So many in number, and so exemplary in quality ; who to this day keep their integrity and concord, when violence hath separated me from them above thirty years : yea, the like mercy of acceptance and success beyond my expectation, he hath showed me every where ; I have had opportunity of free ministration ; even where there were many adversaries I have had an open door ; in the midst of human wrath and rage, he hath preserved my liberty beyond expectation, and continued my acceptance and success. When I might not speak by voice to any single congregation, he enabled me to speak by writing to many ; and for the success of my plainest and popular writings, which cost me least, I can never be sufficiently thankful ; some of which he sent to preach abroad, in other languages, in foreign lands. When my mouth, with eighteen hundred or

two thousand more, had been many years stopped, he hath since opened them in some degree ; and the sufferings intended us by men have been partly put by, and partly much alleviated, by his providence ; and the hardness of our terms hath not so much hindered the success of faithful labors as we feared, and as others hoped it would have done. I have had the comfort of seeing some peace and concord, and prosperity of truth and piety, kept up, under the utmost opposition of diabolical and human power, policy, and wrath. When I have been sent to the common jail for my services and obedience to him, he hath there kept me in peace, and soon delivered me. He hath made the mouths of my greatest enemies, who have studied my defamation and my ruin, to become my witnesses and compurgators, and to cross their own designs. How wonderful is it that I should so long dwell in so much peace, in the midst of those that seemed to want neither power nor skill, and much less will, to tread me down into contempt and misery ! And oh ! how many a danger, fear, and pain hath he delivered this frail and languishing body from ! How oft hath he succored me, when flesh, and heart, and art have failed ! He hath cured my consuming coughs, and, many a time, stayed my flowing blood : he hath eased my pained limbs, and supported a weary, macerated skeleton : he hath fetched me up from the jaws of death, and reversed the sentence which men have passed on me. How many thousand weary days have been sweetened with his pleasant work ; and how many thousand painful, weary nights have had a comfortable morning ! How many thousand strong and healthy persons have been taken away by death, whilst I have been upheld under all this weakness ! Many a time have I cried to the Lord in my trouble, and he hath delivered me out of my distress. I have had fifty years added to my days since I would have been full glad of Hezekiah's promise of fifteen. Since the day that I first preached his gospel, I expected not, of long time, to live above a year ; and I have lived since then fifty years. When my own prayers were cold and unbelieving, how many hundreds have prayed for me ? And what strange deliverances, encouraging fasting and prayer, have I oft had, upon their importunate requests ? My friends have been faithful, and the few that proved unfaithful have profitably

taught me to place no confidence in man, and not to be inordinately affected to any thing on earth ; for I was forsaken by none of them, but those few that I excessively valued and overloved. My relations have been comfortable to me, contrary to my deserts, and much beyond my expectations. My servants have been faithful : my neighbors have been kind : my enemies have been impotent, harmless, or profitable : my superiors have honored me by their respectful words ; and while they have afflicted me, as supposing me a *remora* to their designs, they have not destroyed but protected me. To my inferiors, God hath made me, in my low capacity, somewhat helpful. I have been protected in ordinary health and safety, when the raging pestilence came near my habitation, and consumed a hundred thousand citizens : my dwelling hath been safe when I have seen the glory of the land in flames, and after beheld the dismal ruins. When violence separated me from my too much beloved library, and drove me into a poor and smoky house, I never had more help of God, nor did more difficult work than there. What pleasant retirements and quietness in the country have been the fruits of persecuting wrath ? And I must not forget, when I had more public liberty, how he saved me and all my hearers, even by a wonder, from being buried in the ruins of the fabric where we were ; and others, from the calamities, scandal, and lamentations, which would else have followed ; and it is not a mercy to be extenuated, that when the tongues and pens of all sects among us, and of proud self-exalters, and of some worthy, pious, differing brethren, have been long and vehemently bent against me, when my infamy hath been endeavored, by abundance of volumes, by the backbiting of angry dividers of all sorts, and by the calumniating accusations of some that were too high to be gainsayed, and would not endure me to answer them, and vindicate my innocency ; yet, all these together were never able to fasten their accusations, and procure any common belief, nor to bring me under the designed contempt, much less to break my comforts, encouragements, or labors.

These, all these, and very many more than these, are my experiences of that wondrous mercy which hath measured my pilgrimage, and filled up my days. Never did God break his promise with me ;

never did he fail me, nor forsake me. Had I not provoked him by rash and wilful sinning, how little interruption of my peace and comforts had I ever been likely to have had ! And shall I now distrust him at the last ? Shall I not trust, and quietly trust, that infinite wisdom, love, and power, whom I have so long trusted and found so good ?

Nature teacheth man to love best those animals that are tame and tractable, that trust us and love us, that will come to our hands, and love our company, that will be familiar with us, and follow us, be it horse or dog, beasts or birds : but those that are wild and live in woods, and fly from the face of man, are taken to be the game and prey of any one that can catch and kill them. And shall my foolish soul thus wildly fly from the face of God ? Shall his children be like the fearful hare, or like a guilty Cain, or like an unbelieving Seducer, that either believeth not, or hopeth not for, the forgiveness of sin, and the life everlasting ? Doth not the spirit of adoption incline us to love our Father's presence, and to be loath to be long from home ? To distrust all creatures, even thyself, is not unreasonable ; but to distrust God hath no just excuse. Fly from sin, from Satan, from temptations, from the world, from sinful flesh and idol self ; but fly not from him that is goodness, love, and joy itself. Fear thine enemy, but trust thy Father. If thy heart be reconciled to him and his service, by the Spirit, he is certainly reconciled to thee through Christ : and if he be for thee, and justify and love thee, who shall be against thee, or condemn thee, or separate thee from his love ? If thy unreconciled will do make thee doubt of his reconciliation, it is time to abhor and lay by thy enmity. Consent, and be sure that he consenteth. Be willing to be his, and in holiness to serve him, and to be united in joyful glory to him ; and then be sure that he is willing to accept thee, and receive thee to that glory. O dark and sinful soul ! how little dost thou know thy friend, thyself, or God, if thou canst more easily and quietly trust thy life, thy soul, and hopes to the will of thy friend, or of thyself, if thou hadst power, than to the will of God. Every dog would be at home, and with his master ; much more every ingenuous child with his father : and though enemies distrust us, wife and children will not do so, while they believe us just.

And hath God ever showed himself either unfaithful or unmerciful to me ?

To thee, O Lord, as to a faithful Creator, I commit my soul. (1 Pet. iv. 19.) I know that thou art the faithful God, who keepest covenant and mercy with them that love thee and keep thy commandments. (Deut. vii. 9.) Thou art faithful who hast called me to the communion of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Cor. i. 9.) Thy faithfulness hath saved me in and from temptation; (1 Cor. x. 13;) it hath stablished me, and kept me from prevailing evil; (2 Thess. iii. 3;) and it will keep my spirit, soul, and body to the coming of Christ. (1 Thess. v. 23, 24.) It is in faithfulness that thou hast afflicted me; (Psalm cxix. 75;) and shall I not trust thee, then, to save me? It is thy faithful word, that all thine elect shall obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; and if we be dead with him, shall live with him, and if we suffer, we shall also reign with him. (2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.)

To thee, O my Savior, I commit my soul: it is thine own by redemption; it is thine own by covenant; it is marked and sealed by thy Spirit as thine own, and thou hast promised not to lose it. (John vi. 39.) Thou wast made like us thy brethren, that thou mightest be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for our sins. By thy blood we have boldness to enter into the holiest, even by the new and living consecrated way. Cause me to draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, by thee that art the High Priest over the house of God; for he is faithful that has promised life through thee. (Heb. x. 20—23.) Thy name is faithful and true, (Rev. xix. 11,) and faithful and true are all thy promises. (Rev. xxii. 6, and xxi. 5.) Thou hast promised rest to weary souls that come to thee. (Matt. xi. 28; 2 Thess. i. 7.) I am weary of suffering, and weary of sin; weary of my flesh, and weary of my darkness, and dulness, and distance, and of this wicked, blind, unrighteous, and confounded world: and whither should I look for rest but home to my heavenly Father and to thee? I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me; I am but a smouldering flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace hath kindled; but thou, in whose name the nations trust, wilt bring forth judgment unto vic-

tory. (Matt. xii. 20, 21.) The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in thee shall be desolate. (Psalm xxxiv. 22.) Therefore will I wait on thy name, for it is good, and will trust in the mercy of God for ever. (Psalm lii. 8, 9.) The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. (Nahum i. 7.) Sinful fear is a snare; but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be set on high. (Prov. xxix. 25.) Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, and such as turn aside to lies. (Psalm xl. 4.) Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth. By thee have I been holden up from the womb, and my praise shall be continually of thee. Cast me not off now in the time of age. Forsake me not when my strength faileth; O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now, also, when I am old and grey, O God, forsake me not. (Psalm xvii. 5, 6, 9, 17, 18.) Leave not my soul destitute; for mine eyes are toward thee, and my trust is in thee. (Psalm xiv. 8.) I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; even where they that live shall die no more. The sun may cease to shine on man, and the earth to bear us; but God will never cease to be love, nor to be faithful in his promises. Blessed be the Lord, who hath commanded me so safe and quieting a duty as to trust him, and cast all my cares on him, as on one that has promised to care for me!

II. And blessed be God, who hath made it my duty to hope for his salvation. Hope is the ease, yea, the life of our hearts, that else would break, yea, die within us: despair is no small part of hell: God cherisheth hope as he is the lover of souls. Satan, our enemy, cherisheth despair, when his way of blind presumption faileth. As fear is a foretaste of evil, before it is felt: so hope doth anticipate, and foretaste salvation, before it is possessed. It is then worldly hypocrites' hope that perisheth; for all that hope for true or durable happiness on the earth, in the pleasures of this perishing flesh, must needs be deceived. But happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, which keepeth truth for ever. (Psalm cxlvi. 5, 6.) Wo to

me, were my hope only in the time and matters of this fleshly life ; (1 Cor. xv. 19;) but the righteous hath hope in his death ; (Prov. xiv. 32;) and hope maketh not ashamed. (Rom. v. 5.) Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is. (Jer. xvii. 7.) Lay hold then, O my soul, upon the hope which is set before thee ; (Heb. vi. 18;) it is thy firm and steadfast anchor, (ver. 19,) without it thou wilt be as a shipwrecked vessel. Thy foundation is sure ; it is God himself ; our faith and hope are both in God. (1 Pet. i. 21.) It is Jesus our Lord who is risen from the dead, and reigneth in glory, Lord of all. (1 Tim. i. 1.) Yea, it is the Christ, who by faith doth dwell within us, who is our hope of glory. (Eph. iii. 17; Col. i. 27.) In this hope, which is better than the law that Moses gave, it is that we draw nigh to God ; (Heb. vii. 19;) it is the Holy Ghost, that is both our evidence, and the efficient of our hope. (Gal. v. 5; Rom. viii. 16, 23.) By him we hope for that which we see not, and therefore wait in patience for it ; (ver. 24, 25;) by hope are we saved. It is an encouraging grace which will make us stir, when as despair doth kill endeavors ; it cureth sloth, and makes us diligent and constant to the end, and by this doth help us to full assurance. (Heb. vi. 11, 12.) It is a desiring grace, and would fain obtain the glory hoped for. It is a quieting and comforting grace. (Rom. xv. 4.) The God of hope doth fill us with joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. (Ver. 13.) Shake off despondency, O my soul, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom. v. 2.) Believe in hope, though dying flesh would tell thee that it is against hope. (Rom. iv. 18.) God, that cannot lie, hath confirmed his covenant by his immutable oath, that we might have strong consolation who are fled for refuge to the hope which is set before us. (Heb. vi. 18.) What blessed preparations are made for our hope ; and shall we now let the tempter shake it, or discourage it? The abundant mercy of God the Father hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. (1 Pet. i. 3.) Grace teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, as looking for that blessed hope,

and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior. (Tit. ii. 12, 13.) We are renewed by the Holy Ghost, and justified by grace, that we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Tit. iii. 6, 7.) We are illuminated, that we may know the hope of Christ's calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. (Eph. i. 18, 19.) The hope that is laid up for us in heaven, is the chief doctrine of the gospel, which bringeth light and immortality into clearer light. (Col. i. 5; 2 Tim. i. 10.) It is for this hope that we keep a conscience void of offence, and that God is served in the world; (Acts xxiv. 15, 16, and xxvi. 7;) wherefore gird up the loins of thy mind; put on this helmet, the hope of salvation; (1 Thess. v. 8;) and let not death seem to thee as it doth to them that have no hope. (1 Thess. iv. 13.) The love of our Father, and our Savior, have given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, to comfort our hearts, and establish them in every good word and work. (2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.) Keep, therefore, the rejoicing of hope, firm to the end. (Heb. iii. 6.) Continue grounded and settled in the faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel. (Col. i. 23; 1 Pet. i. 13.) And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee. (Psalm. xxxix. 7.) Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope. (Psalm cxix. 116.) Though mine iniquities testify against me, yet, O thou that art the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in the time of trouble, be not as a stranger to my soul. (Jer. xiv. 7, 8.) Thy name is called upon by me, oh, forsake me not! (Ver. 9.) Why have our eyes beheld thy wonders, and why have we had thy covenant, and thy mercies, but that we might set our hope in God. (Psalm lxxviii. 5, 7.) Remember the word to thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. (Psalm cxix. 49.) If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope; I will hope in the Lord, for with him there is mercy and plenteous redemption. (Psalm cxxx. 3—5, 7.) For he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. (Psalm cxlvii. 11.) Though flesh and heart fail, the Lord

is the rock of my heart ; he is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good to them that wait for him ; to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that I should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for me that I have borne the yoke in my youth, and that I keep silence, and put my mouth in the dust as if so be there may be hope. (Psalm lxxiii. 26 ; Lam. iii. 24—27, 29.)


God need not flatter such worms as we, nor promise us that which he never meaneth to perform. He hath laid the rudiments of our hope, in a nature capable of desiring, seeking, and thinking of another life : he hath called me by grace, to actual desires and endeavors ; and some foretaste he hath vouchsafed. I look for no heaven, but the perfection of divine life, light, and love, in endless glory with Christ and his holy ones. And this he hath begun in me already ; and shall I not boldly hope when I have the capacity, the promise, and the earnest and foretaste ? Is it not God himself that has caused me to hope ? Was not nature, promise, and grace from him ? And can a soul miscarry, and be deceived, that departeth hence in a hope of God's own causing, and encouraging ? Lord, I have lived in hope, I have prayed in hope, I have labored, suffered, and waited in hope ; and, by thy grace, I will die in hope. And is not this according to thy word and will ? And wilt thou cast away a soul that hopeth in thee, by thine own command and operation ? Had wealth and honor, or continuance on earth, or the favor of man, been my reward and hope, my hope and I had died together. Were this our best, how vain were man ! But the Lord liveth, and my Redeemer is glorified, and intercedeth for me ; and the same Spirit is in heaven, who is in my heart, (as the same sun is in the firmament which is in my house,) and the promise is sure to all Christ's seed. And millions are now in heaven, that once did live and die in hope ; they were sinners once, as now I am ; they had no other Savior, no other Sanctifier, no other promise, than I now have ; confessing that they were strangers here, they looked for a better country, and for a city that had foundations, even a heavenly, where now they are : and shall I not follow them in hope that have sped so well ? Hope then, O my soul unto the end. (1 Pet. i. 13.) From henceforth, and for

ever, hope in the Lord. (Psalm. cxxxi. 13.) I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more; my mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and salvation. (Psalm lxxi. 14, 15.) The Lord is at my right hand; I shall not be moved. My heart, therefore, is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall dwell confidently, and rest in hope; for God hath showed me the path of life: in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, are pleasures for evermore. (Psalm xvi. 8—11.)

III. What then remaineth, O my soul, but that, in trust and hope, thou love thy God, thy Savior, thy Comforter, the glorious society, thy own perfection in glorious, endless, heavenly life, and light, and love, and the joyful praises of Jehovah, better than this burden of painful and corruptible flesh, and this howling wilderness, the habitation of serpents and untamed brutes, where unbelief and murmuring, lust and folly, injustice and uncharitableness, tyranny and divisions, pride and contention, have long provoked God, and wearied thee! Where the vintage and harvest is thorns and thistles, sin and sorrows, cares and crosses, manured by manifold temptation. How odious is that darkness and unbelief, that unholiness and disaffection, that deadness and stupidity, which maketh such a work as this so reasonable, necessary, and pleasant a work, to seem unsuitable or hard? Is it unsuitable or hard to the eye, to see the sun and light; or by it to see the beautiful world? or for a man to love his life or health, his father, or his friend? What should be easier to a nature that hath rational love, than to love him that is essential love itself. He that loveth all, and giveth to all the loving faculty, should be loved by all; and he that hath specially loved me, should be specially loved by me.

Love is the perfection of all thy preparations. It desireth to please God, and therefore to be in the most pleasing state, and freed from all that is displeasing to him, which is not to be hoped for on earth. It desireth all suitable nearness, acquaintance, union, and communion. It is weary of distance, estrangedness, and alien society and affairs. It taketh advantage of every notice, intimation, or mention of God, to renew and exercise these desires. Every message and mercy from him is fuel for love, and, while we are short of perfection, stir up our desires after more. When love tasteth of the

grapes, it would have the vine. When it tasteth of the fruits, it would dwell where they grow, and possess the land. Its thoughts of proximity and fruition are sweet; no other person or thing can satisfy it. The soul is where it loveth. If our friend dwell in our hearts by love, and if fleshly pleasure, riches, and honor, do dwell in the heart of the voluptuous, the covetous, and the proud, surely God and our Redeemer, the heavenly society, holiness, and glory, do dwell in the heart which loveth them with a fervent love. And if heaven dwell in my heart, shall I not desire to dwell in heaven? Light and light, fire and fire, are not more inclined to union than love and love; gracious love, and glorious love. Would divine, original, universal love communicate and pour out itself more plentifully upon my heart, how easy would it be to leave this flesh and world, and to hear the sentence of my departure to my God? Death and the grave would be but a triumph for victorious love. It would be easier to die in peace and joy, than to rest at night, or to come home from my travel to my beloved friends, or to go, when I am hungry, to a feast. A little love hath made me study willingly, and preach willingly, and write willingly, yea, and suffer somewhat willingly; and would not more make me go more willingly to God? Shall the imagination of house, gardens, walks, libraries, prospects, meadows, orchards, hills, and rivers, allure the desires of deceived minds? And shall not the thoughts of the heavenly mansions, society, and delights, much more allure and draw up my desires? The reading of a known fiction of a *Civitas Solis*, an *Utopia*, an *Atlantis*, &c., hath pleased many; but if I did believingly hear of such a country in the world, where men did never die, nor were sick, or weak, or sad; where the prince was perfectly just and pious, wise and peaceable, devoted to God and the public good; and the teachers were all wise, judicious men, of universal certain knowledge, perfectly acquainted with the matter and method of natural and theological truths, and all their duty, and all of one mind, and of one heart, and tongue and practice, loving each other, and the people as themselves, and leading the flocks heavenward, through all temptations, with triumphant hopes and joy; where all the people perfectly obeyed God, their commanders, and their teachers, and lived in per-



fect love, unity, and peace, and were daily employed in the joyful praises of God, and hopes of glory, and in doing all possible good to one another, contending with none through ignorance, uncharitableness, or pride, nor ever reproaching, injuring, or hurting one another, &c. I say, if I knew or heard of such a country, should I not love it before I ever see it, and earnestly desire to be there? Nay, do I over-love this distracted world, where tyranny sheddeth streams of blood, and layeth desolate cities and countries, and exposeth the miserable inhabitants to lamentable distress and famine; where the same tyranny sets up the wicked, reproacheth and oppresseth the just and innocent, keepeth out the gospel, and keepeth up idolatry, infidelity, and wickedness, in the far greatest part of all the earth; where Satan chooseth pastors too often for the churches of Christ, even such as by ignorance, pride, sensuality, worldliness, and malignity, become thorns and thistles, yea, devouring wolves, to those whom they should feed and comfort; where no two persons are in all things of a mind; where evil is commended, and truth and goodness accused and oppressed, because men's minds are unacquainted with them, or unsuitable to them. And those that are the greatest pretenders to truth do most eagerly contend against it, and oppose it; and almost all the world are scolding or scuffling in the dark; and where there appeareth but little hopes of a remedy, I say, can I love such a world as this? And shall I not think more delightfully of the inheritance of the saints in light, and the uniting love and joyful praises of the church triumphant, and the heavenly choir?

Should I not love a lovely and a loving world much better than a world where there is, comparatively, so little loveliness or love? All that is of God is good and lovely, but it is not here that his glory shineth in felicitating splendor. I am taught to look upward when I pray, and to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." God's works are amiable, even in hell; and yet, though I would know them, I would not be there. And, alas! how much of the works of man are mixed here with the works of God! Here is God's wisdom manifest; but here is man's obstinate folly. Here is God's government; but here is man's tyranny and unruliness. Here is God's love and mercies; but here are men's malice, wrath and cruelty;

by which they are worse to one another, than wolves and tigers, depopulating countries, and filling the world with bloodshed, famine, misery, and lamentations, proud tyrants being worse than raging plagues; which made David choose the pestilence before his enemies' pursuit. Here is much of God's beauteous order and harmony; but here is also much of man's madness, deformity, and confusion. Here is much historical truth, and some ecclesiastical justice; but, alas! with how much odious falsehood and injustice is it mixed? How is much precious theological verity; but how dark is much of it to such blind, and negligent, and corrupted minds, as every where abound. Here are wise, judicious teachers and companions to be found; but alas! how few, in comparison of the most; and how hardly known by those that need them. Here are sound and orthodox ministers of Christ; but how few that most need them know which are they, and how to value them or use them. And how many thousands of seduced or sensual sinners are made to believe that they are but deceivers, or, as they called Paul, pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition among the people. And in how many parts of the world are they as the prophets that Obadiah hid in caves, or as Micaiah, or Elias among the lying prophets, or the Baalites. Though such as of whom the world is not worthy. And is that world, then, more worthy of our love than heaven! There are worthy and religious families which honor God, and are honored by him; but alas! how few; and usually by the temptations of wealth, and worldly interest, how full even of the sins of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, if not also unmercifulness to the poor. And how are they tempted to plead for their sins and snares, and account it rustic ignorance which contradicteth them. And how few pious families are there of the greater sort, that do not quickly degenerate; and posterity, by false religion, error or sensuality, grow most contrary to the minds of their pious progenitors. There are many that educate their children wisely in the fear of God, and have, accordingly, comfort in them; but how many are there, that having devoted them in baptism to God, do train them up in the service of the flesh, the world and the devil, which they renounced, and never understood, or at least intended, for themselves or children, what they did profess. How many parents think that

when they offer their children to God in baptism, without a sober and due consideration of the nature and meaning of that great covenant with God, that God must accept and certainly regenerate and save them. Yea, too many religious parents forget that they themselves are sponsors in that covenant, and undertake to use the means, on their part, to make their children fit for the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, as they grow up, and think that God should absolutely sanctify, keep, and save them at age, because they are theirs, and were baptised, though they keep them not from great and unnecessary temptations, nor teach them plainly and seriously the meaning of the covenant which was made for them with God, as to the nature, benefits, or conditions of it. How many send them to others to be taught in grammar, logic, philosophy, or arts, yea, and divinity, before their own parents ever taught them what they did with God in baptism, what they received, and what they promised and vowed to do. They send them to trades, or secular callings, or to travel in foreign lands, among a multitude of snares, among tempting company, and tempting baits, before ever at home they were instructed, armed, and settled against those temptations which they must needs encounter, and which, if they overcome them, they are undone. How ordinarily, when they have first neglected this great duty of their own, for their fortification, do they plead a necessity of thrusting them out on these temptations, though utterly unarmed, from some punctilio of honor, or conformity to the world, to avoid the contempt of worldly men, or to adorn their (yet naked) souls with some of the plumes or painted trifles, ceremonies, or compliments, which will never serve instead of heavenly wisdom, mortification, and the love of God and man. As if they were like to learn that fear of God in a crowd of diverting and tempting company, baits, and business, which they never learned under the teaching, nurture, and daily oversight, of their religious parents, in a safer station : or as if, for some little reason, they might send them as to sea without pilot or anchor, and think that God must save them from the waves : or as if it were better to enter them into Satan's school, or army, and venture them upon the notorious danger of damnation, than to miss of preferment and wealth, or of the fashions and favor of the times : and then when they hear that they have forsaken God, and

true religion, and given up themselves to lust and sensuality, and, perhaps, as enemies, to God and good men, destroy, what their parents labored to build up, these parents wonder at God's judgments, and with broken hearts lament their infelicity, when it were better to lament their own misdoing, and it had been best of all to have lamented it.

Thus families, churches, and kingdoms, run on to blindness, ungodliness, and confusion : self-undoing, and serving the malice of Satan for fleshly lust, is the too common employment of mankind : all is wise, and good, and sweet, which is prescribed us by God, in true nature, or supernatural revelation : but folly, sin, and misery, mistaking themselves to be wit, and honesty, and prosperity, and raging against that which nominally they pretend to and profess, are the ordinary case and course of the most of men : and when we would plead them out of their deceit and misery, it is well if we are not tempted to imitate them, or be not partly infected with their disease, or at least reproached and oppressed as their enemies : such a Bedlam is most of the world become, where madness goeth for the only wisdom, and he is the bravest man that can sin and be damned with reputation and renown, and successfully drive or draw the greatest number with him unto hell ; to which the world hath no small likeness, forsaking God, and being very much forsaken by him.

This is the world which standeth in competition for my love, with the spiritual, blessed world : much of God's mercies and comforts I have here had : but their sweetness was their taste of divine love, and their tendency to heavenly perfection. What was the end and use of all the good that ever I saw, or that ever God did for my soul or body, but to teach me to love him, and long for more ? How many weaning experiences ; how many thousand bitter or contemning thoughts have I had of all the glory and pleasures of this world. How many thousand love tokens from God have called me to believe and taste his goodness. Wherever I go, and which way soever I look, I see vanity and vexation written upon all things in this world, so far as they stand in competition with God, and would be the end and portion of a fleshly mind : and I see holiness to the Lord written upon every thing in this world, so far as it declareth God

and leadeth me to him, as my ultimate end. God hath not for nothing engaged me in war against this world, and commanded me to take and use it as mine enemy : the emptiness, dangerousness, and bitterness of the world, and the all-sufficiency, trustiness, and goodness of God, have been the sum of all the experiences of my life ? And shall a worldly, backward heart overcome the teaching of nature, Scripture, the Spirit of grace, and all experience ? Far be it from me !

But, O my God ! love is thy great and special gift : all good is from thee : but love is the godlike nature, life, and image : it is given us from the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the quickening, illuminating, and sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit : what can the earth return unto the sun, but its own reflected beams,—if those ? As, how far soever man is a medium in generation, nature, and that appetite which is the moving *pondus* in the child, is thy work ; so whatever is man's part in the mediate work of believing and repenting, (which yet is not done without thy Spirit and grace,) certainly it is the blessed Regenerator, which must make us new creatures, by giving us thy divine nature, holy love, which is the holy appetite and *pondus* of the soul. Come down, Lord, into this heart, for it cannot come up to thee. Can the plants for life, or the eye for light, go up unto the sun ? Dwell in me by the Spirit of love, and I shall dwell by love in thee. Reason is weak, and thoughts are various, and man will be a slippery, uncertain wight, if love be not his fixing principle, and do not incline his soul to thee : surely through thy grace I easily feel that I love thy word, I love thy image, I love thy work, and, oh, how heartily do I love to love thee, and long to know and love thee more ! And if all things be of thee, and through thee, and to thee, surely this love to the beams of thy glory here on earth is eminently so ! It is thee, Lord, that it meaneth : to thee it looketh : it is thee it serveth : for thee it mourns, and seeks, and groans : in thee it trusts : and the hope, and peace, and comfort which support me, are in thee. When I was a returning prodigal in rags, thou sawest me afar off, and didst meet me with thy embracing, feasting love : and shall I doubt whether he that hath better clothed me, and dwelt within me, will entertain me with a feast of greater love in the heavenly mansions, the world of love ?

The suitableness of things below to my fleshly nature, hath detained my affections too much on earth : and shall not the suitableness of things above to my spiritual nature much more draw up my love to heaven ? There is the God whom I have sought and served : he is also here ; but veiled, and but little known : but there he shineth to heavenly spirits in heavenly glory. There is the Savior in whom I have believed : he hath also dwelt in flesh on earth ; but clothed in such meanness, and humbled to such a life and death, as was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles matter of reproach : but he shineth and reigneth now in glory, above the malice and contempt of sinners. And I shall there live because he liveth ; and in his light I shall have light. He loved me here with a redeeming, regenerating, and preserving love : but there he will love me with a perfecting, glorifying, joyful love. I had here some rays of heavenly light : but interpositions caused eclipses and nights, yea, some long and winter nights : but there I shall dwell in the city of the sun, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, where there is no night, eclipse, or darkness : there are the heavenly hosts, whose holy love, and joyful praises, I would fain be a partaker of ! I have here had some of their loving assistance, but to me unseen, being above our fleshly way of converse ; but there I shall be with them, of the like nature, in the same orb, and of the same triumphant church and choir ! There are perfected souls gathered home to Christ : not, as here, striving, like Esau and Jacob in the womb ; nor yet as John when he leaped in the womb, because of his mother's joy ; nor as wrangling children, that are hardly kept in the same house in peace : not like the servants of Abraham and Lot, like Paul and Barnabas, like Epiphanius and Chrysostom, like Luther and Carolostadius, like Ridley and Hooper, or the many striving parties now among us ; nor like the disciples striving who should be the greatest : not like Noah's family in a wicked world, or Lot in a wicked city, or Abraham in an idolatrous land : nor like Elijah left alone ; nor like those that wandered in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, hid in dens and caves of the earth : not like Job on the dung-hill ; nor like Lazarus at the rich man's door : not like the African bishops, whose tongues were cut out ; nor like the preachers silenced

by Popish imposers; (in Germany by the interim, or elsewhere;) nor like such as Tzegedine, Peucer, and many other worthy men, whose maturest age was spent in prisons: not as we poor bewildered sinners, feeling evil, and fearing more, confounded in folly and mad contention, some hating the only way of peace, and others groping for it in the dark, wandering and lost in the clearest light, where the illuminated can but pity the blind, but cannot make them willing to be delivered. What is heaven to me, but God? God, who is life, and light and love, communicating himself to blessed spirits, perfecting them in the reception, possession, and exercise of life, and light, and love for ever. These are not the accidents, but the essence of that God who is heaven and all to me. Should I fear that death which passeth me to infinite, essential life? Should I fear a darksome passage into a world of perfect light? Should I fear to go to love itself? Think, O my soul, what the sun's quickening light and heat is to this lower, corporeal world? Much more is God, even infinite life, and light and love, to the blessed world above. Doth it not draw out thy desires to think of going into a world of love? When love will be our region, our company, our life; more to us than the air is for our breath, than the light is for our sight, than our food is for our life, than our friends are for our solace; and more to us than we are to ourselves. O excellent grace of faith which doth foresee, and blessed word of faith that doth foreshow, this world of love! Shall I fear to enter where there is no wrath, no fear, no strangeness, nor suspicion, nor selfish separation, but love will make every holy spirit as dear and lovely to me as myself, and me to them as lovely as themselves, and God to us all more amiable than ourselves and all: where love will have no defects or distances, no damps, or discouragements, no discontinuance or mixed disaffection; but as life will be without death, and light without darkness, (a perfect, everlasting day of glory,) so will love be without any hatred, unkindness, or allay. As many coals make one fire, and many candles conjoined make one light, so will many living spirits make one life, and many illuminated, glorious spirits, one light and glory, and many spirits, naturalized into love, will make one perfect love of God, and be loved as one by God for ever: for all the body of Christ is one; even here

it is one in initial union of the Spirit, and relation to one God, and Head, and Life, (1 Cor. xii. throughout; Eph. iv. 1—17,) and shall be presented as beloved and spotless to God, when the great marriage day of the Lamb shall come. (Eph. v. 24, 25, &c.; Rev. lxxi. and xxii.) —

Hadst thou not given me, O Lord, the life of nature, I should have had no conceptions of a glorious, everlasting life: but if thou give me not the life of grace, I shall have no sufficient delightful inclination and desire after it. Hadst thou not given me sight and reason, the light of nature, I should not have thought how desirable it is to live in the glorious light and vision; but if thou give me not the spiritual illumination of a seeing faith, I shall not yet long for the glorious light, and beatific vision. Hadst thou not given me a will and love, which is part of my very nature itself, I could not have tasted how desirable it is to live in a world of universal, perfect, endless love: but unless thou also shed abroad thy love upon my heart, by the Spirit of Jesus, the great medium of love, and turn my very nature or inclination into divine and holy love, I shall not long for the world of love. Appetite followeth nature: oh! give me not only the image and the art of godliness; the approaches towards it, nor only some forced or unconstant acts; but give me the divine nature, which is holy love, and then my soul will hasten towards thee, and cry, 'How long, O Lord, how long! O come, come quickly, make no delay.' Surely the fear of dying intimateth some contrary love that inclineth the soul another way; and some shameful unbelief, and great unapprehensiveness of the attractive glory of the world of love: otherwise no frozen person so longeth for the fire, none in a dungeon so desireth light, as we should long for the heavenly light and love.

God's infinite, essential self-love, in which he is eternally delighted in himself, is the most amiable object, and heaven itself to saints and angels: and next to that his love to all his works, to the world, and to the church in heaven, speaketh much more of his loveliness than his love to me. But yet due self-love in me, is his work, and part of his natural image; and when this by sin is grown up to excess, (through the withdrawing of a contracted, narrow soul, from the union and due love to my fellow-creatures, and to God,) I must also,

I cannot but, inquire after God's love to me : and by this my desires must be moved ; for I am not so capable of ascending above self-interest, and self-love, as in the state of glorious union I shall be. I am glad to perceive that others do love God ; and I love those most that I find most love him : but it is not other men's love to God that will be accepted by him instead of mine : nor is it God's love to others (which yet rejoiceth me) that will satisfy me, without his love to me. But when all these are still before me, God's essential self-love and delight, his love to his creatures, especially the glorified, and his love to me also, even to me, a vile, unworthy sinner ; what then should stay my ascending love, or discourage my desires to be with God ?

And dost thou doubt, canst-thou doubt, O my soul, whether thou art going to a God that loveth thee ? If the Jews discerned the great love of Christ to Lazarus by his tears, canst thou not discern his love to thee in his blood ? It is nevertheless, but the more, obliging and amiable that it was not shed for thee alone, but for many. May I not say as Paul, (Gal. ii. 20,) "I live by the faith of the Son of God, that hath loved me, and given himself for me." Yea, it is not so much I that live, as Christ liveth in me : and will he forsake the habitation which his love hath chosen ; and which he hath so dearly bought ? Oh, read often that triumphing chapter Rom. viii., and conclude, "What shall separate us from the love of God ?" If life have not done it, death shall not do it. If leaning on his breast at meat was a token of Christ's special love to John, is not his dwelling in me by my faith, and his living in me by his Spirit, a sure token of his love to me : and if a dark saying, "If he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ?" raised a report that the beloved disciple should not die, why should not plain promises assure me that I shall live with him that loveth me forever ? Be not so unthankful, O my soul, as to question, doubtingly, whether thy heavenly Father, and thy Lord, doth love thee ? Canst thou forget the sealed testimonies of it ? Did I not even now repeat so many as should shame my doubts ? A multitude of thy friends have loved thee so entirely, that thou canst not doubt of it : and did any of them signify their love with the convincing evidence that God hath done ? Have they done for

thee what he hath done ? Are they love itself ? Is their love so full, so firm, and so unchangeable, as his ? My thoughts of heaven are the sweeter, because abundance of my ancient, lovely, and loving holy friends are there : and I am the willing, by death, to follow them. And should I not think of it more pleasedly because my God and Father, my Savior, and my Comforter, is there ? And not alone, but with all the society of love. Was not Lazarus in the bosom of God himself ? Yet it is said that he was in Abraham's bosom ; as the promise runs, that we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. And what maketh the society of the saints so sweet as holy love ? It is comfortable to read, that "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and might," is the first and great commandment ; and the second is like to it, "to love our neighbor as ourselves." For God's commands proceed from that will which is his nature, or essence, and they tend to the same as their objective end. Therefore, he that hath made love the great command, doth tell us that love is the great conception of his own essence, the spring of that command ; and that this commanded, imperfect love doth tend to perfect, heavenly love, even to our communion with essential, infinite love. It were strange, that the love and goodness which is equal to the power that made the world, and the wisdom that ordereth it, should be scant and backward to do good, and to be suspected more than the love of friends ! The remembrance of the holiness, humility, love, and faithfulness, of my dearest friends of every rank, with whom I have conversed on earth, in every place where I have lived, is so sweet to me, that I am oft ready to recreate myself with the naming of such as are now with Christ. But in heaven they will love me better than they did on earth ; and my love to them will be more pleasant. But all these sparks are little to the sun.

Every place that I have lived in was a place of divine love, which there set up its obliging monuments. Every year and hour of my life hath been a time of love ; every friend, and every neighbor, yea, every enemy, have been the messengers and instruments of love ; every state and change of my life, notwithstanding my sin, hath opened to me treasures and mysteries of love. And after such a life of

love, shall I doubt whether the same God do love me? Is he the God of the mountains, and not of the vallies? Did he love me in my youth and health, and doth he not love me in my age, and pain, and sickness? Did he love all the faithful better in their life than at their death? If our hope be not chiefly in this life, neither is our state of love, which is principally the heavenly, endless grace. My groans grieve my friends, but abate not their love. Did he love me for my strength, my weakness might be my fear; as they that love for beauty loathe them that are deformed, and they that love for riches despise the poor. But God loved me when I was his enemy, to make me a friend, and when I was bad, to make me better. Whatever he taketh pleasure is in his own gift. Who made me to differ? And what have I that I have not received? And God will finish the work, the building, the warfare, that is his own. Oh, the multitude of mercies to my soul and body, in peace and war, in youth and age, to myself and friends, the many great and gracious deliverances which have testified to me the love of God! Have I lived in the experience of it, and shall I die in the doubts of it? Had it been love only to my body, it would have died with me, and not have accompanied my departing soul. I am not much in doubt of the truth of my love to him; though I have not seen him, save as in a glass, as in a glass seen I love him. I love my brethren whom I have seen, and those most that are most in love with him. I love his word, and works, and ways, and fain I would be nearer to him, and love him more; and I loathe myself for loving him no better. And shall Peter say more confidently, "Thou knowest that I love thee," than "I know that thou lovest me?" Yes, he may; because, though God's love is greater and steadfaster than ours, yet our knowledge of his great love is less than his knowledge of our little love; and as we are defective in our own love, so are we in our certainty of its sincerity. And without the knowledge of our love to God, we can never be sure of his special love to us. But yet I am not utterly a stranger to myself; I know for what I have lived and labored in the world, and whose is it at I have desired to please. The God whose I am, and whom I serve, hath loved me in my youth, and he will love me in my aged weakness. My flesh and my heart fail; my pains seem

grievous to the flesh ; but it is love that chooseth them, that useth them for my good, that moderateth them, and will shortly end them. Why then should I doubt of my Father's love ? Shall pain or dying make me doubt ? Did God love none from the beginning of the world but Enoch and Elias ? And what am I better than my forefathers ? What is in me that I should expect exemption from the common lot of mankind ? Is not a competent time of great mercy on earth, in order to the unseen felicity, all that the best of men can hope for ? O for a clearer, stronger faith, to show me the world that more excelleth this, than this excelleth the womb where I was conceived ! Then should I not fear my third birthday, what pangs soever go before it ; nor be unwilling of my change. The grave, indeed, is a bed that nature doth abhor, yet there the weary be at rest. But souls new born have a double nature that is immortal, and go to the place that is agreeable to their nature, even to the region of spirits, and the region of holy love. Even passive matter, that hath no other natural motion, hath a natural inclination to uniting, aggregative motion. And God maketh all natures suitable to their proper ends and use. How can it be that a spirit should not incline to be with spirits ? and souls, that have the divine nature in holy love, desire to be with the God of love ? Arts, and sciences, and tongues, become not a nature to us ; else they would not cease at death. But holy love is our new nature, and therefore ceaseth not with this bodily life. And shall accidental love make me desire the company of a frail and mutable friend ? And shall not this engrafted, inseparable love, make me long to be with Christ ? Though the love of God to all his creatures will not prove that they are all immortal, nor oblige them to expect another life, that never had capacity or faculties to expect it, yet his love to such as in nature and grace are made capable of it, doth warrant and oblige them to believe and hope for the full perfection of the work of love. Some comfort themselves in the love of St Peter, as having the keys of heaven. And how many could I name that are now with Christ, who loved me so faithfully on earth, that were I sure they had the keys and power of heaven, and were not changed in their love, I could put my departing soul into their hands, and die with joy.

And is it not better in the hand of my Redeemer, and the God of love, and Father of Spirits? Is any love comparable to his; or any friend so boldly to be trusted? I should take it for ungrateful unkindness in my friend to doubt of my love and trustiness, if I had given him all that he hath, and maintained him constantly by my kindness; but oh, how odious a thing is sin! which, by destroying our love to God, doth make us unmeet to believe and sweetly perceive his love; and by making us doubt of the love of God, and lose the pleasant relish of it, doth more increase our difficulty of loving him. The title that the angel gave to Daniel, "A man greatly beloved of God," methinks should be enough to make one joyfully love and trust God, both in life and death? Will Almighty love ever hurt me or forsake me; And have not all saints that title in their degrees? What else signifieth their mark and name, Holiness to the Lord? What is it but our separation to God, as his peculiar, beloved people? And how are they separated but by mutual love, and our forsaking all that alienateth, or is contrary? Let scorers deride us as self-flatterers, that believe they are God's darlings; and wo to the hypocrites that believe it on their false presumption! Without such belief or grounded hopes I see not how any man can die in true peace. He that is no otherwise beloved than hypocrites and unbelievers, must have his portion with them. And he that is no otherwise beloved than as the ungodly, unholy, and unregenerate, shall not stand in judgment, nor see God, nor enter into his kingdom. Most upright souls are to blame for groundless doubting of God's love; but not for acknowledging it, rejoicing in it, and, in their doubts, being most solicitous to make it sure. Love brought me into the world, and furnished me with a thousand mercies. Love hath provided for me, delivered me, and preserved me, till now; and will it not entertain my separated soul? Is God like false or insufficient friends, that forsake us in adversity?

I confess that I have wronged love by sin; by many and great unexcusable sins. But all, save Christ himself, were sinners, which love did purify, and receive to glory. God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace we are saved,

and hath raised us up together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. ii. 4—6.) O that I could love much that have so much forgiven! The glorified praise him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God. (Rev. i. 5, 6.) Our Father that hath loved us, giveth us consolation and good hope, through grace. (2 Thess. ii. 16.) I know no sin which I repent not of with self-loathing; and I earnestly beg and labor that none of my sins may be to me unknown. I dare not justify even what is any way uncertain; though I dare not call all that my sin which siding men, of different judgments, on each side, passionately call so. While both sides do it on contrary accounts, and not to go contrary ways is a crime. O that God would bless my accusations to my illumination, that I may not be unknown to myself! Though some think me much better than I am, and others much worse, it most concerneth me to know the truth myself; flattery would be more dangerous to me than false accusations: I may safelier be ignorant of other men's sins than of my own. Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me, Lord, from secret sins, and let not ignorance or error keep me in impenitence; and keep thou me back from presumptuous sins. (Psalm xix. 12, 13.) I have an advocate with the Father, and thy promise, that he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy. Those are, by some men, taken for my greatest sins, which my most serious thoughts did judge to be the greatest of my outward duties, and which I performed through the greatest difficulties, and which cost me dearest to the flesh, and the greatest self-denial and patience in my reluctant mind. Wherever I have erred, Lord, make it known to me, that my confession may prevent the sin of others; and where I have not erred, confirm and accept me in the right.

And seeing an unworthy worm hath had so many testimonies of thy tender love, let me not be like to them, that when thou saidst, 'I loved you,' unthankfully asked, 'Wherein hast thou loved us?' (Mal. i. 2.) Heaven is not more spangled with stars, than thy word and works with the refulgent signatures of love. Thy well-beloved Son, the Son of thy love, undertaking the office, message, and work of the greatest love, was full of that Spirit which is love, which he

sheds abroad in the hearts of thine elect, that the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Spirit, may be their hope and life. His works, his sufferings, his gifts, as well as his comfortable word, did say to his disciples, "As the Father loved me so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John xv. 9.) And how, Lord, shall we continue in it, but by the thankful belief of thy love and loveliness, desiring still to love thee more, and in all things to know and please thy will; which thou knowest is my soul's desire.

Behold then, O my soul, with what love the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have loved thee, that thou shouldest be made and called a son of God, redeemed, regenerate, adopted into that covenant state of grace in which thou standest. "Rejoice, therefore, in hope of the glory of God, being justified by faith, having peace with God, and access by faith and hope that maketh not ashamed; that being reconciled, when an enemy, by the death of Christ, I shall be saved by his life. (Rom. v. 1, 2.) Having loved his own, to the end he loveth them, and without end. His gifts and calling are without repentance. When Satan, and thy flesh, would hide God's love, look to Christ, and read the golden words of love in the sacred gospel; and peruse thy many recorded experiences, and remember the convictions which secret and open mercies have many a time afforded thee. But especially draw nearer to the Lord of love, and be not seldom and slight in thy contemplations of his love and loveliness; dwell in the sunshine, and thou wilt know that it is light, and warm, and comfortable. Distance and strangeness cherish thy doubts; acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace.

Yet look up, and oft and earnestly look up, after thy ascended, glorified Head, who said, "Tell my brethren I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Think where and what he is, and what he is now doing for all his own; and how humbled, abased, suffering love is now triumphant, regnant, glorified love; and therefore no less than in all its tender expressions upon earth. As love is no where perfectly believed but in heaven, so I can nowhere so fully discern it, as by looking up by faith to my Father and Savior, which is in heaven, and conversing more believingly with the heavenly society. Had I done this more and better, and as

I have persuaded others to do it, I had lived in more convincing delights of God's love, which would have turned the fears of death into more joyful hopes, and more earnest desires to be with Christ, in the arms, in the world, in the life of love, as far better than to be here, in a dark, a doubting, fearing world.

But O Father of infinite love ! though my arguments be many and strong, my heart is bad, and my strength is weakness, and I am insufficient to plead the cause of thy love and loveliness to myself or others. Oh, plead thy own cause, and what heart can resist ? Let it not be my word only, but thine, that thou lovest me, even me, a sinner ; speak it as Christ said to Lazarus, " Arise." If not, as thou tellest me that the sun is warm, yet as thou hast told me that my parents and my dearest friends did love me, and much more powerfully than so. Tell it me, as thou tellest me that thou hast given me life, by the consciousness and works of life ; that while I can say, " Thou that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee ;" it may include, ' Therefore I know that I am beloved of thee ;' and therefore come to thee in the confidence of thy love, and long to be nearer in the clearer sight, the fuller sense, and joyfuller exercise of love for ever. Father, into thy hand I commend my Spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ! Amen.

AN

APPENDIX.

A BRIEVE OF THE HELPS OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

A BRIEVE OF THE PROOF OF SUPERNATURAL REVELATION, AND
THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. TIMOTHY iii. 16.*Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*

THESE are the creed, or six articles of the gospel which the apostles preached.

Sect. 1. I. God manifested in the flesh of Jesus, is the first and great article. Believe this, and believe all. No wonder that believing Jesus Christ is the Son of God is so often made in Scripture, the description of saving faith, the title to baptism, and pardon, and salvation, the evidence of the Spirit, &c. He that truly and practically believeth that God came in flesh to man, and that Christ is the Father's messenger from heaven, must needs believe that God hath a great value for the souls of men, and for his church, that he despiseth not even our flesh; that his word is true, and fully to be trusted; that he who so wonderfully came to man, will certainly take up man to him. Who can doubt of the immortality of souls, or that Christ will receive the departing souls of the faithful to himself, who believeth that he took man's nature, and hath glorified it now in heaven, in union with the divine? Who can ever have low thoughts of God's love and mercy who believeth this? and who can prostitute his soul and flesh to wickedness, who firmly believeth that he took the soul and flesh of man to sanctify and glorify it?

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Sect. 2. II. The Holy Spirit is the justification of the truth of Jesus Christ. He is Christ's advocate and witness to the world. He proveth the gospel by these five ways of evidence : 1. By all the prophecies, types, and promises of Christ in the Old Testament, before Christ's coming. 2. By the inherent impress of God's image on the person and doctrine of Christ ; which, *propria luce*, sheweth itself to be divine. 3. By the concomitant miracles of Christ : read the history of the gospel for this use, and observe each history. 4. By the subsequent gift of the Spirit to the apostles and other Christians, by languages, wonders, and multitudes of miracles, to convince the world. 5. By the undeniable and excellent work of sanctification on all true believers through all the world, in all generations to this day. These five are the Spirit's witness, which fully testifieth the certain truth, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Sect. 3. Quest. But how are we sure, who, ourselves, never saw the person, miracles, resurrection, ascension of Christ, that the history of them is true ?

Ans. i. We may be sure that the spectators were not deceived.
 ii. And that they did not deceive them to whom they reported it.
 iii. And that we are not deceived by any miscarriage in the historical tradition to us.

Sect. 4. i. It was not possible that men that were not mad, that had eyes and ears, could for three years and a half, believe that they saw the lame, the blind, the deaf, and all diseases healed, the dead raised, thousands miraculously fed, &c., and this among crowds of people that still followed Christ, if the things had not been true. One man's senses may be deceived at some one instance, by some deceitful accident : but that the eyes and ears of multitudes should be so oft deceived, many years, in the open light, is as much as to say, no man knoweth any thing that he seeth and heareth.

Sect 5. ii. That the disciples who received the apostles' and evangelists' report of Christ, were not deceived by the reporters, is most evident.

For, 1. They received it not by hearsay, at the second hand, but from the eye and ear witnesses themselves, who must needs know what they said.

2. They heard this report from men of the same time, and age, and country, where it was easy to examine the case, and confute it, had it been false.

3. The apostles appealed to crowds and thousands of witnesses, as to many of Christ's miracles, who would have made it odious, had it not been true.

4. They sharply reproved the rulers for persecuting Christ, which would provoke them to do their best to confute the apostles for their own justification.

5. Christ chose men of no great human learning and subtlety, but common, plain, unlearned men, that it might not be thought a deceit of art.

6. Yea, he did not make much more known to them before his death, than the bare matters of fact which they daily saw, and that he was the Christ, and moral doctrine; his death, resurrection, ascension, and kingdom of heaven, they knew little of before; but experience, and the sudden coming down of the Spirit, suddenly taught them all the rest.

7. They taught not one another, but were every one personally taught of God.

8. And yet they all agreed in the same doctrine when they were dispersed over the world, and never differed in any one article of faith.

9. They were men that had no worldly interest, wealth, or dominion to seek.

10. Yea, they renounced and denied all worldly interest, and sealed their testimony by their sufferings and blood; and all in hope of a heavenly reward, which they knew that lying was no means to obtain.

11. Had they plotted to cheat the world for nothing, the sin is so heinous that some one of them would have repented and confessed it, at least, at death; which none of them did, but died joyfully, as for the truth.

12. Paul was converted by a voice and light from heaven, in the presence of those that travelled with him in his persecuting design.

13. But yet it is a fuller evidence, that the doctrine which they delivered, as from God, beareth a divine impress ; that, as the light, it is its own evidence.

14. And for the more infallible conviction, they that testified of Christ's miracles, did the like themselves to confirm their testimony. They spake with tongues which they never learned ; they healed all diseases ; even the shadow of Peter, and the clothes that came from Paul, did heal men ; they raised the dead ; and they that in all countries converted the nations by their own miracles, attesting the miracles and resurrection of Christ, must needs compel the spectators to believe them.

15. Yet, more than all this, those that believed them were presently enabled to do the like in one kind and degree or other. The same extraordinary gift of the Spirit fell upon the common multitude of believers, by the laying on of the apostles' hands ; so that Simon Magus would fain have bought that power with money. And when men witnessed Christ's miracles, and wrought the like themselves ; and those that believed them had and did the like, either healing, tongues, prophecy, or some wonder, it was, sure, an infallible way of testifying.

16. When wrangling heretics quarrelled with the apostles, and would draw away disciples to themselves, by disparaging them, they still appealed to the miracles wrought by these disciples themselves, or in their sight ; as Gal. iii. 1, 2, 3, 5. And as Christ, when the Jews said he did all by Beelzebub, when he cast out devils, asked them, " By whom do your children cast them out ? " Which, had it been false, would have turned all the people from them.

17. Their adversaries were so far from writing any confutation of their testimony, that they confessed the miracles, and had no shift, but either to blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and say that they were done by the devil, or else, by persecution and violence, to oppress them. As if the devil were master of the world, and could remedilessly deceive it against God's will ; or God himself would send or suffer a full course of miracles remedilessly to deceive the world, which is to make God like the devil : or, as if the devil were so good, as by miracles to promote so holy, and amiable, and just a doctrine, as

- that of Christianity, to make men wise, and good, and just, and kill their sin. So that this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost makes Satan to be God, or God to be Satan.

18. All the cruelty, powers, learning, and policy of their adversaries was not able to stop the progress of this testimony, much less to prevail against it.

iii. It is then most certain, that the first witnesses were not deceived by Christ, nor believers after deceived by them. The next question is, whether we be not deceived by a false historical tradition of these things? Had we seen them all ourselves, we must needs have believed; but at this distance we know not what misreports may intervene. What eyesight and hearing was to them, that tradition is to us. Now the question is, is it certainly the very same fact and doctrine which they received, and which we receive?

And here, let it be premised, that there is no other way of assurance, than that which God hath afforded us, that the reason of man could have desired.

1. If we would see God, and heaven, and hell, this is not a way suitable to the state of probationers that live in flesh on earth. Angels live by vision, and fruition of glory; and brutes, by sense, on sensible beings; but reasonable travellers must live by reason, and by believing certain revelation.

2. If God will send his Son from heaven to ascertain us, and we will believe no more than we see ourselves, then Christ must dwell on earth, to the end of the world, and he must be in all places of the earth at once, that all may see; and he must die and rise again before all men in all ages; and how mad an expectation is this!

3. Or if all that deliver us the history must work miracles before our eyes, or else we will not believe them, it is still most absurd. Will you not believe that the laws of the land are genuine, or that ever there were such kings as made them, unless he that tells it you work miracles? Shall not children believe their parents, or scholars their tutors, unless they work miracles!

4. I must premise that there are three sorts of tradition, I. Such as depends on the common wit and honesty of mankind. And this is very much to be suspected, wickedness, folly, and lying being grown so common in the world.

■ You know who were your parents, and when and where you were
 ■ born, &c., by such tradition in a lower degree. This dependeth
 not on pretended authority, nor on mere honesty; but on natural
 ■ necessity.

- Having premised this, I come to prove, that we have such tradi-
 tion of physical, infallible evidence, that the faith of the present
 church, in the essentials, is the same which the first churches re-
 ceived infallibly from the apostles.

1. The world knoweth, that ever since Christ's ascension, all that
 believed in him were baptised, as all Abraham's covenant seed were
 circumcised. And what is baptism, but a profession of belief in
 Jesus Christ, as dead, risen, and glorified; and a devoting ourselves
 in covenant to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? All that ever
 were Christians by solemn vow professed this same faith; and this is
 such a tradition of Christianity as human generation, down from
 Adam, is of the same humanity in the world.

2. They that were baptised were catechised first; in which the
 three articles of baptism were open to them; of which Christ's death,
 resurrection, and ascension were part; and this hath been an unde-
 niable tradition of the same faith.

3. The sum of the christian faith was, from the beginning, drawn
 up in certain articles called the creed, which expounded the three bap-
 tismal articles; and all churches on earth had the same in sense, and
 most in words; and all at age that were baptised, professed this
 creed; which is as full a tradition of the same belief in Christ's birth,
 death, and resurrection, ascension, and glory, as speaking is a tradi-
 tion of the same human nature.

4. Before Christ's ascension, he instituted the office of the sa-
 cred ministry, which friends and foes confess hath continued ever
 since. And what is this ministry, but an office of publishing the
 gospel of Christ, his life, death, miracles, resurrection, grace, &c.
 What else have they done in all ages in the world? so that the of-
 fice is an undeniable tradition.

5. Christ and his apostles instituted the weekly celebration of the
 remembrance of his resurrection on the Lord's days: friends and
 foes confess the history, that the first day of the week hath been

kept for such memorial ever since, through all the Christian part of the world, which proveth the uninterrupted belief of Christ's resurrection, as a notorious, practical tradition.

6. Christ and his apostles, ever since his resurrection, instituted solemn assemblies of Christians to be held on those days, and at other times ; once a week was the least through the Christian world : and what did they meet for, but to preach, hear, and profess the same christian faith ?

7. It was the constant custom of Christians in their assemblies, and their houses, to sing hymns of praise to Jesus Christ, in remembrance of his resurrection, &c. Pliny tells Trajan that this was the practice by which Christians were known by their persecutors : which is a practical tradition.

8. Jesus Christ instituted, and all Christians to this day have constantly used, the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice, called the eucharist ; to keep in remembrance his death till he come, and profess their belief that he is our life. And as the constant celebration of the passover, with all its ceremonies, was a most certain tradition of the Egyptians' plagues, and Israelites' deliverance, more than a bare written history would be, so hath the Lord's supper been, of the uninterrupted belief of the history of our redemption by Christ.

9. The church hath from the beginning, had a constant discipline, by which it hath kept itself separate from heretics, who have denied any essential article of this faith, which is a sure tradition of the same belief ?

10. None question but Christians have, from the beginning been persecuted for this same faith, and in persecution made confession of it : persecutors and confessors, then, are both the witnesses of the continuance.

11. Whenever heretics or enemies have written against Christians, their apologies and defences show that it was this same faith which they owned.

12. Most of the adverse heretics owned the same matters of fact.

13. The Jews were long before in possession of the books of the Old Testament, which bear their testimony to Christ.

14. The books of the New Testament have, by certain tradition, been delivered down to this present day, which contain the matters of fact and doctrine, the essential, integrals, and accidents of the faith.

15. No enemies have written any thing against the matter of fact, of any moment.

16. Yea, the Jews, and other bitterest enemies, confess much of the miracles of Christ.

17. Martyrs have cheerfully forsaken life and all in confessing it.

18. God, by his wonderful providence, hath maintained it.

19. The devil, and all the wicked of the world, are the greatest enemies to it.

20. The Holy Ghost hath still blessed it, to work the same holy and heavenly nature and life, in all sincere and serious believers.

Quest. This proveth infallibly the tradition of the same faith in the essentials : but how prove you that the same holy Scripture is delivered as uncorrupted ?

Ans. All the Bible is not brought down so unchanged as are the essentials of our religion : when there were no Bibles but what scribes wrote, no wonder if oversight left few copies without some of their slips. There are hundreds of various readings in the New Testament, and of many no man can be certain which is true : but none of them are such as make any difference in the articles of our faith or practice, nor on which any point of doctrine or fact dependeth.

And the words are necessary but for the matter which they do record.

And 1. All ministers, and all churches, constantly used this same Scripture publicly and privately, as the word of God, so that it could not be easily altered.

2. They all knew that a curse is pronounced against every one that addeth or diminisheth ; which must needs possess them with fear of corrupting it.

3. They took it to be the charter of their own salvation.

4. The work of the ministers was to expound it, and preserve it against corrupters.

5. These ministers and churches were over much of the world, and could not agree together to corrupt it; and if some did it, all the rest would soon detect it.

6. Heresies and quarrels were quickly to rise among them; so that cross interests and animosities would soon have fallen upon the corrupters.

7. Some heretics made some adding and corrupting attempts, which the church presently condemned, and turned it to their shame.

8. In all the disputations then managed, the same Scriptures were appealed to.

9. The translations into various languages show that the books were the same, without any momentous difference.

10. To this day, when sin and tyranny have torn the church into many factions, they all receive the same canonical Scriptures, except that some receive more apocryphal writings, which yet make no alteration at all of our gospel faith.

Quest. But doth not this laying so much on tradition favor popery?

Ans. No: The difference is here. 1. Papists are for tradition, as a supplement to the Scripture, as if this were but part of the word of God: and, 2. They plead for a peculiar power of being the keepers and judges of that supplemental tradition, which other churches know nothing of.

But we, 1. Plead for the infallible, practical tradition of the essentials of Christianity by itself, and in the creed, &c., which is less than the Scripture. 2. And next for the certain tradition of the Scripture itself, uncorrupted in all that faith depends on: which scripture is the complete record of God's will and law, containing more than essentials and integrals.

So much of God, 1. Manifested in the flesh; 2. Justified in the Spirit.

III. He was seen of angels; that is, angels were the beholding, witnessing, and admiring servants of this great mystery, God manifested in the flesh.

1. Angels preached Christ at his incarnation.

2. Angels ministered to Christ in his temptations, agonies, &c.

3. Angels were preachers and witnesses of his resurrection.

4. Angels rolled away the stone, and terrified the soldiers.
5. Angels preached his return to them that gazed up at his ascension.
6. Angels opened the prison-doors, and set the imprisoned apostles free once, and Peter alone, afterwards.
7. Angels rejoice in heaven at the conversion of all that Christ brings home.
8. Angels disdain not to be the guardians of the least of Christ's disciples.
9. Angels are protecting officers over churches and kingdoms.
10. Angels have preached to apostles, and been the messengers of their revelations.
11. Angels have been the instruments of miracles, and of destroying the church's enemies.
12. Angels will ministerially convoy departed souls to Christ.
13. Angels will gloriously attend Christ at his return, and sever the wicked from the just.
14. Angels will be our companions in the heavenly choir for ever.

Therefore, 1. We should love angels. 2. And be thankful to God for them. 3. And think the more comfortably of heaven for their society. 4. And pray for the benefit of their ministry on earth, especially in all our dangers.

IV. The fourth article is "Preached to the Gentiles." The Jews having the covenant of peculiarity, were proud of their privilege, even while they unworthily abused it; and despised the rest of the world, and would not so much as eat with them, as if they had been God's only people. And, indeed, the rest of the world was so corrupted, that we find no one nation that, as such, renounced idolatry, and was devoted in covenant to the true God alone, as the Jews were. Now that God should be manifested in flesh, to reconcile the heathen world to himself, and extend greater privileges, indefinitely to all nations, than ever the Jews had in their state of peculiarity, this was a mystery of godliness, which the Jews did hardly yield belief to.

And that which aggravateth this wonder is, 1. That the Gentile world was drowned in all idolatry and unnatural wickedness, such as

Paul describeth. And that God should suddenly and freely send them the message of reconciliation, and be found of them that sought him not, is that wonder which obligeth us Gentiles, who once lived as without God in the world, to be thankful to him. (Rom. i. 2 ; Eph. ii., and iii. 18, &c.)

V. The fifth article is "Believed on in the world." The effect of the gospel on the souls of men in their effectual faith, is one of the evidences of the christian truth.

I told you before, that the fifth witness of the Spirit on the souls of all believers, I reserved to be here mentioned. Here, i. It is a part of the wonder, that Christ should be believed on in the world, even with a common faith. For, 1. To believe a mean man to be the Mediator between God and man, and the Savior of the world ; yea, one that was crucified as a malefactor ; this must needs be a difficult thing.

2. The very Jewish nation was as contemptible to the Romans, being one of their poorest subdued provinces, as the Gentiles were to the Jews : and Christ was by birth a Jew.

3. The greatness of the Roman empire then, ruling over much of the world, was such that by preaching, and not by war, to bring them to be subjects to a crucified Jew, was a marvellous work ; and so to bring the conquered nations to become Christ's voluntary subjects.

4. The Roman and Greek learning was then at the height of its perfection : and the Christians were despised by them as unlearned barbarians : and that learning, arts, and empire should all submit to such a King and Savior, was certainly a work of supernatural power. Christ did not levy armies to overcome the nations, nor did victory move them ; but the victors and lords of the world, and these no fools, but the masters of the greatest human wisdom, were conquered by the gospel, preached by a sort of inferior men.

5. And this gospel which conquered them was still opposed by them, and the Christians persecuted as a sort of hated men, till it overcame the persecutors.

It is true that heathenism hath the greatest part of the world, and Mahometans have as much as Christians : but one sort got it by the

sword, and the other by the doctrine and holy lives of a few unarmed, inferior men.

ii. But I use this of the extent of faith, but as a probable, and not a cogent argument: but the main argument is from the sanctifying effect of faith.

I know it will be said that many, or most, Christians are as bad as other men.

But it is one thing to be of a professed religion, because it is the religion of the king and country, and therefore maketh for men's worldly advantage, and they hear little said against it: this is the case of most in the world, Christians, Mahometans, and heathens: and it is another to be a serious believer, who, upon trial and consideration, chooseth Christianity.

And it is notorious that such serious Christians are all holy, sober, and just, and so greatly differing from the corrupted world, as fully proveth that God owneth that gospel which he maketh so effectual to so great a change.

Here consider, 1. What that change is. 2. How hard and great a work it is. 3. That it is certainly a work of God. 4. That the gospel is the means by which God doth it.

i. The nature of his holy work on all serious, sincere Christians, is, it sets all their hopes and hearts on the promised glory of the life to come, and turns the very nature of their wills into the predominant love of God and man, and of heaven and holiness. It mortifieth all fleshly lusts, and subjects sense to reason and faith, the body to the soul, and all to God. It sets a man's heart on the sincere study of doing all the good he can in the world, to friends, neighbors and enemies, especially the most public good. To live soberly, righteously, and godly, is his delight. Sin is his chief hatred, and nothing more grievous to him than he that cannot reach to greater perfection in faith, hope, obedience, patience, and in heavenly love and joy. It causeth a man to condemn wealth, honor, and fleshly pleasure, and life, in comparison of God's love and life everlasting. This change of God's Spirit worketh on all true believers.

Those that are ungodly have but the name of Christians; they never well understood what Christianity is, nor ever received it by

a true belief. But all that understandingly and seriously believe in Jesus Christ, are sanctified by his spirit.

ii. And this is a greater work than miracles, in excellency and difficulty.

1. It is the very health of the souls. It is salvation itself; it maketh man in his measure like to God, and is his image. It is a heavenly nature, and is the earnest and preparation for heaven. It delivereth man from the greatest evil on earth, and giveth him the firmest peace and joy, in his peace with God, the pardon of his sins, and the hope of everlasting glory.

2. It is easy to discern how great a work this is, by the deep roots of all the contrary vices in the corrupted nature of man. Experience assureth us that man, by vitiated nature, is proud and ignorant, and savoreth little but the things of the flesh, and worldly interest, and is a slave to appetite and lust: his bodily prosperity is all that really bath his heart. Yea, if God restrain them not, all wicked men are bitter enemies to all that are truly wise and holy, even among heathens and infidels; if any be but better than the rest, the wicked are their deadly enemies. There is so visible an enmity between godliness and wickedness, the seed of Christ, and of the serpent in the world, as is a great confirmation of the Scripture which describeth it. And it is not the name of Christians that altereth men's nature. We here, that have peace from all the world, are under such implacable hatred of wicked men, that call themselves Christians, that so many bears or wolves would be less hurtful to us.

3. And the universal spreading of this wickedness over all the earth, in all ages and nations, doth tell us how great a work it is to cure it.

4. And so doth the frustration of all other means, till the Spirit of God do it by setting home the gospel upon the heart. Children will grow up in wickedness, against all the counsel, love, and correction of their parents. No words, no reason, will prevail with them, more than with drunken men or beasts.

5. We find it a very hard thing to cure a man of some one rooted sin, much more of all.

6. The common misery of the world proclaimed man's vice, and the difficulty of the cure. How else comes the world to live in self-seeking falsehood, fraud, malice, and in bloody wars, worse than wolves and serpents against each other.

7. Lastly, where God cureth this by true believing, it is done with the pangs of sharp repentance, and a great conflict, before God's Spirit overcometh.

iii. It is evident, then, that this sanctification of souls is an eminent work of God himself. 1. In that it is yet done on so many of his chosen ones in all ages and places.

2. In that, as hard as it is, he usually turneth the hearts of sinners to himself, in a very little time. Sometimes by one sermon.

3. It is a work that none can do but God, who hath the power of souls.

4. It is a work so good, that it beareth God's own image. It is but the writing of his law and gospel on men's hearts. None is so much for it as God. Satan apparently fighteth against it with all the power he can raise in the world. Mark it, and you will find that most of the stir that there is in the world, by false teachers, and tyrants, and private malice, is but Satan's wars against faith, and holiness, and love. Certainly it is not he that promoteth them.

iv. And it is evident in experience, that it is the gospel of Christ which God useth and blesseth, to do this great sanctifying work on souls. Among Christians none are converted by any other means. And God would not bless a word of falsehood and deceit to such great and excellent effects. All that are made holy and heavenly, and truly conscionable, among us, are made so by Christ's gospel. And all the wicked are enemies to the serious practice of it, or rebels that despise it. The effects daily prove that God himself owneth it as his word.

If you say, there are as good men among the heathens and Mahometans, as holy, heavenly, and just: I answer, it is none of my business to depreciate other men, but I can say, 1. That I have lived above seventy seven years, and I never knew one serious, holy person in England that was made such by the writings of heathens or Mahometans. 2. Many excellent things are in the writings of some

heathens, Plato, Cicero, Hierocles, Plutarch, Antonine, Epictetus, and many others ; but I miss in them the expressions of that holy and heavenly flame of mind and life, and that victory over the flesh and world, which Christianity containeth.

3. Christ is like the sun, whose beams give some light before it is seen itself at its rising, and after it is set. The light of Jews and heathens was as the dawning of the day before sun-rising. And the light among the Mahometans is like the light of the sun which leaveth it when it is set.

Doubtless, the same God who hath used Mahometans to be his dreadful scourge to wicked Christians, who abused the gospel by a false profession, hath also used them to do abundance of good against idolatry in the heathen world. Wherever they come, idolatry is destroyed. Yea, the corrupt Christians, Greeks, and especially papists, that worship images, angels, and bread, are rebuked, and condemned justly by Mahometans. But O that they who have conquered so far by the sword, were conquered by the sacred word of truth, and truly understood the mystery of redemption, and the doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ !

Obj. But they think us idolaters for saying that Christ is God, and believing the Trinity.

1. As to the trinity : it is no contradiction that one fire or sun should have essentially a virtue or power to move, light, and heat ; nor that one soul should have a power of vegetation, sense, and reason ; nor as rational, to have a peculiar power or vitality, intellection, and free-will. Why then should the Trinity seem incredible ?

2. We do not believe that the Godhead hath any change, or is made flesh, or the manhood made God, but that the Godhead is incomprehensibly united to the human nature by assumption, so as he is united to no other creature, by and for those peculiar operations on the humanity of Christ, which make him our Redeemer.

They that well think that God is all in all things, more than a soul to all the world, and as near to us as our souls to our bodies, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, will find that it is more difficult to apprehend, how God is further from any soul, than that he is so much one with Christ : save that different operations of God on his creatures are apparent to us.

By all this we see that every sanctified Christian hath the certain witness in himself that Christ is true. He is truly a physician that healeth, and a Savior that saveth all that seriously believe and obey him. The Spirit of God in a new, and holy, and heavenly nature of spiritual life, and light, and love, is the witness.

VI. The sixth article in my text is 'Received up into glory.'

That Christ after forty days' continuance on earth, was taken up into heaven, in the sight of his disciples, is a matter of fact of which we have all the forementioned infallible proof, which I must not here again repeat.

And, 1. If Christ were not glorified now in heaven, he could not send down his Spirit with his word on earth, nor have enabled the first witnesses to speak with all tongues, and heal the sick, and raise the dead, and do all the miracles which they did. A dead man cannot send down the holy Spirit in likeness of fiery cloven tongues, nor enable thousands to do such works; nor could he do what is done on the souls of serious believers in all ages and nations to this day. He is sure alive that makes men live; and in heaven, that draws up hearts to heaven.

2. And this is our hope and joy: heaven and earth are in his power. The suffering and work which he performed for us on earth was short, but his heavenly intercession and reign is everlasting. Guilty souls can have no immediate access to God. All is by a Mediator: all our receivings from God are by him, and all our services are returned by him, and accepted for his sake. And as he is the Mediator between his Father and us, his Spirit intercedeth between him and us. By his Spirit he giveth us holy desires, and every grace. And by his Spirit we exercise them in returns to him.

And our glorified Savior hath Satan, and all our enemies, in his power: life and death are at his command: all judgment is committed to him. He that hath redeemed us is preparing us for heaven, and it for us, and receiveth our departing souls to his own joy and glory. He hath promised us that we shall be with him where he is, and shall see his glory. He that is our Savior, will be our Judge. He will come with thousands of his angels to the confusion of wicked unbelievers, and to be glorified in his saints. He will

make a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell. Angels and glorified saints shall, with Christ our head, make one city of God, or holy society and choir, in perfect love and joy, to praise the blessed God forever.

The differences between this world, and that which I am going to.

I. This world is God's footstool. That is his throne.

II. Here are his works of inferior nature and of grace. There he shineth forth in perfect glory.

III. Here is gross, receptive matter moved by invisible powers. There are the noblest efficient communicative powers moving all.

IV. This is the inferior, subject, governed world. That is the superior, regent world.

V. This is a world of trial, where the soul is his that can win its consent. That is a world where the will is perfectly determined and fixed.

VI. Satan winning men's consent hath here a large dominion of fools. There he is cast out, and hath no possession.

VII. Here he is a tempter and troubler of the best. There he hath neither power to tempt nor trouble.

VIII. This world is as the dark womb where we are regenerated. That is the world of glorious light into which we are born.

IX. Here we dwell on a world of sordid earth. There we shall dwell in a world of celestial light and glory.

X. Here we dwell in a troublesome, tempting, perishing body. There we are delivered from this burden and prison into glorious liberty.

XI. Here we are under a troublesome cure of our maladies. There we are perfectly healed, rejoicing in our Physician's praise.

XII. Here we are using the means in weariness and hope. There we obtain the end in full fruition.

XIII. Here sin maketh us loathsome to ourselves, and our own annoyance. There we shall love God in ourselves, and our perfect selves in God.

XIV. Here all our duties are defiled with sinful imperfection. There perfect souls will perfectly love and praise their God.

XV. Here Satan's temptations are a continual danger and molestation. There perfect victory hath ended our temptations.

XVI. Here still there is a remnant of the curse and punishment of sin. Pardon and deliverance are perfected there.

XVII. Repenting, shame, sorrow, and fear, are here part of my necessary work. There all the troublesome part is past, and utterly excluded.

XVIII. Here we see darkly, as in a glass, the invisible world of spirits. There we shall see them as face to face.

XIX. Here faith, alas! too weak, must serve instead of sight. There presence and sight suspend the use of such believing.

XX. Desire and hope are here our very life and work. But there it will be full felicity in fruition.

XXI. Our hopes are here oft mixed with grievous doubts and fears. But there full possession ends them all.

XXII. Our holy affections are here corrupted with carnal mixtures. But there all are purely holy and divine.

XXIII. The coldness of our divine love is here our sin and misery. The perfection of it will be there our perfect holiness and joy.

XXIV. Here, though the will itself be imperfect, we cannot be and do what we would. There will, and deed, and attainment, will all be fully perfect.

XXV. Here, by ignorance and self-love, I have desires which God denieth. There perfect desires shall be perfectly fulfilled.

XXVI. Here pinching wants of something or other, and troublesome cares, are daily burdens. Nothing is there wanting, and God hath ended all their cares.

XXVII. Sense here rebelleth against faith, and reason, and oft overcometh. Sense there shall be only holy, and no discord be in our faculties or acts.

XXVIII. Pleasures and contents here are short, narrow, and twisted with their contraries. There they are objectively pure and boundless, and subjectively total and absolute.

XXIX. Vanity and vexation are here the titles of transitory things. Reality, perfection, and glory, are the titles of the things above.

XXX. This world is a point of God's creation, a narrow place for a few passengers. Above are the vast, capacious regions, sufficient for all saints, and angels.

XXXI. This world is as Newgate, and hell as Tyburn ; some are hence saved, and some condemned. The other world is the glorious kingdom of Jehovah with the blessed.

XXXII. It was here that Christ was tempted, scorned, and crucified. It is there where he reigneth in glory over all.

XXXIII. The spiritual life is here as a spark or seed. It is there a glorious flame of love, and joy, and the perfect fruit and flower.

XXXIV. We have here but the first-fruits, earnest, and pledge. There is the full and glorious harvest and perfection.

XXXV. We are here children in minority, little differing from servants. There we shall have full possession of the inheritance.

XXXVI. The prospect of pain, death, grave, and rottenness, blasteth all the pleasures here. There is no death, or any fear of the ending of felicity.

XXXVII. Here, even God's word is imperfectly understood, and errors swarm, even in the best. All mysteries of nature and grace are there unveiled in the world of light.

XXXVIII. Many of God's promises are here unfulfilled, and our prayers, unanswered. There truth shineth in the full performance of them all.

XXXIX. Our grace is here so weak, and hearts so dark, that our sincerity is oft doubted of. There the flames of love and joy leave no place for such a doubt.

XL. By our inconstancy, here one day is joyful and another sad. But there our joys have no interruption.

XLI. We dwell here with sinful companions, like ourselves, in flesh. There holy angels and souls, with Christ, are all our company.

XLII. Our best friends and helpers are here, in part, our hinderers by sin. There all concur in the harmony of active love.

XLIII. Our errors and corruptions make us also hurtful and troublesome to our friends. But there both Christ and they forgive us, and we shall trouble them no more.

XLIV. Selfishness and cross interests here jar, and mar our conversation. There perfect love will make the joy of every saint and angel mine.

XLV. A militant church imperfectly sanctified here liveth in scandal and sad divisions. The glorious church united in God in perfect love hath no contention.

XLVI. Sin and error here turn our very public worship into jars. The celestial harmony of joyful love and praise is, to mortals inconceivable.

XLVII. Weak, blind, and wicked teachers here do keep the most in delusion and division. There glorious light hath banished all lies, deceit and darkness.

XLVIII. The wills of blind tyrants is the law of most on earth. The wisdom and will of the most holy God is the law of the heavenly society.

XLIX. Lies here cloud the innocency of the just, and render truth and goodness odious. All false judgments are there reversed, and slander is silenced, and the righteous justified.

L. Government is here exercised by terror and violence. But there God ruleth by light, love, and absolute delight.

LI. Enemies, reproach, and persecution here annoy and tempt us. All storms are there past, and the conquerors crowned in joyful rest.

LII. The glory of divine love and holiness is clouded here by the abounding of sin, and the greatness of Satan's kingdom upon earth. But the vast, glorious, heavenly kingdom, to which this earth is but a point and prison, will banish all such erring thoughts, and glorify God's love, and goodness for ever.

LIII. This is the world which, as corrupted, is called an enemy to God and us, and which, as such, we renounce in baptism, and must be saved from. That is the world which we seek, pray, and wait for all our lives, and for which all the tempting vanities of this must be forsaken.

LIV. This body and world is like our riding clothes, our horse, our way, and inn, and traveling company ; all but for our journey homeward. The other is our city of blessedness, and everlasting rest, to which all grace inclineth souls, and all present means and mercies tend.

LV. The very ignorance of nature and sensible things makes this life a very labyrinth, and our studies, sciences, and learned conversation, to be much like a dream, or puppet play, and a childish stir about mere words. But in heaven, an universal knowledge of God's wonderful works, will not be the least of the glory in which he will shine to saints.

LVI. Distance and darkness of souls here in flesh, who would fain know more of God and the heavenly world, and cannot, doth make our lives a burden by these unsatisfied desires. There glorious presence and intuition giveth full satisfaction.

LVII. Our sin and imperfection here render us incapable of being the objects of God's full, complacential love, though we have his benevolence, which will bring us to it. But there we shall, in our several measures, perfectly please God, and be perfectly pleased in God for ever.

LVIII. All things here are short and transitory from their beginning, posting towards their end, which is near and sure, and still in our eye. So short is time, that beings here are next to nothing ; the bubble of worldly prosperity, pomp, and fleshly pleasure, doth swell up, and break in so short a moment ; as that it is, and is not, almost at once. But the heavenly substances, and their work, and joys, are crowned by duration, being assuredly everlasting.

Such, O my soul, is the blessed change which God will make.

The reasons and helps of my belief and hope of this perfection.

I. Natural reason assureth me, that God made all creatures fitted to their intended use ; even brutes are more fit to their several offices than man is. He giveth no creature its faculties in vain ; whatever a wise man maketh, he fits it to the use which he made it for ; but man's faculties are enabled to think of a God, of our relation, and our duty to him, of our hopes from him, and our fears of him ;

of the state of our souls related to his judgment ; of what will befall us after death, reward, or punishment, and how to prepare for it. This nature and its faculties and powers, are not made in vain.

II. Reason assureth me, that all men are bound by nature to prefer the least probability of a life of everlasting joy before all the prosperity of this world ; and to suffer the loss of all this short vanity, to escape the least possibility of endless misery ; and nature hath such notices of rewards and punishments after death, that no man can say that he is sure there is no such thing. From whence it followeth, that all men are bound by the very law of nature, to be religious, and to seek first and most the salvation in the life to come. And if so, it is certain that there is such a thing to be obtained ; else God had made the very nature of man to be deceived by itself, and to spend the chief part, yea, all his life, through labor and suffering, for that which is not ; and so made his greatest duty to be his greatest deceit and misery ; and the worst men should be least deceived. But all this is not to be imputed to our wise and good Creator.

III. The universal sense of moral good and evil in all mankind, is a great evidence of another life. The vilest atheist cannot abide to be accounted a knave, a liar, and a bad man ; nor will equal a vicious servant with another. All would be thought good, who will not be good. And doth not God make a greater difference than man ? and will he not show it ?

IV. The world is actually ruled much by the hopes and fears of another life, and cannot well be ruled without it, according to the nature of man ; but the Almighty, most wise, and most holy God needs not, and will not rule the world by mere deceit.

V. The gospel of Christ hath brought life and immortality into a clearer light than that of nature ; and it must be by believing in Christ that we must have our full satisfaction. Oh, what hath God done in the wonders of redemption to make us sure ! And against the doubts that are apt to rise from some hard particular text of Scripture, it must be considered, i. That Christ and his Apostles did put the ascertaining seal of the many uncontrolled miracles to the gospel doctrine, primarily ; which doctrine, 1. Was delivered and sealed eight years before any of the New Testament was written, and almost

seventy before the last. 2. And Christ did not speak in the language in which the gospel is written to us ; so that being but a translation as to his own words the matter is thing first sealed.

ii. And that it was the two legislative mediators, Moses and Christ, who came with the great stream of uncontrolled miracles ; it being necessary that men should have full proof that a law or doctrine is of God, before they believe it ; but the priests and prophets after Moses, and the preachers and pastors of the christian church, who were not commissioned to bring men any new laws or gospel, but to proclaim and teach that which they received, needed no such testimony of miracles.

iii. The belief of every particular priest or prophet after Moses, or every pastor after Christ and his apostles, was not of the same degree of necessity to salvation as the belief of the law and gospel itself. Therefore though all the holy Scripture be true, the law and the gospel must be much differenced from the rest.

iv. The history of the law and gospel have full, ascertaining, historical evidence ; or else there is none such in the world. Therefore the doctrine must be true.

v. The prophecies fulfilled prove the gospel true.

vi. And the divine impress on the whole.

vii. And the sanctifying work of the Spirit wrought by it, in all nations and ages, on serious believers, is a constant, divine attestation.

VI. And as my faith hath so sure a foundation, it confirmeth my faith and hope, that it hath been so long and great a work of God, by his Word and Spirit on my soul, to raise it to believe, and love, and desire, that holy state of perfection and fruition which I hope for. That which hath made me so much better than I else had been, and turned my heart and life (though imperfectly) to things above the pleasures of the flesh, must needs be of God ; and God would never send his grace to work my heart to deceit and lies, and give me such graces as all shall be frustrate ; his Spirit is the earnest and first-fruits of glory.

VII. And all the course of religious and moral duty which he hath commanded me, and in which he hath employed my life, were never imposed to deceive me ; I am sure by nature and Scripture, that it is

my duty to love God and my neighbor, to desire protection, and to serve God, and do good with all my time and power, and to trust God for my reward, believing that all this shall not be in vain; nor that which is best be made my loss. O blessed be God for commands and holy duty; for they are equal to promises. Who can fear that he shall lose by seeking God?

VIII. As God hath sealed the truth of his word as aforesaid, so he hath, by an instituted office and ordinance, sealed and delivered to myself his covenant with the gift of Christ and life, in baptism, and the Lord's supper.

IX. He hath given me such a love to holy things and persons, that I greatly long to see his church in perfect light, and love, and concord; oh! how sweet would it be to see all men wise, and holy, and joyfully praising God. Every Christian longs for this; and, therefore, such a state will be.

X. I have found here the great benefit of the love and ministry of angels, such as is described in Psalm xci. They have kept me night and day, which confirmeth my hope that I shall dwell with them; for I love them better than men, because they love and serve God better.

XI. That low communion which I have here with God by Christ and the Spirit, in his answer to my prayers, supports, comforts, experience, tends to more.

XII. The pleasure which I have by love, in thinking of the happiness of my many, many, many holy departed friends, and of the glory of Christ, and the heavenly Jerusalem, is sure some hopeful approach towards their state.

XIII. When I see the fire mount upward, and think that spirits are of a more sublime and excellent nature than fire; and when I see that all that is done in this world, is done by spiritual unseen powers, which move this gross and drossy matter, it puts me past doubt, that my soul, being a spirit, hath a vast and glorious world of spirits to ascend to. God hath, by nature, put into all things an aggregative, uniting inclination: earth hath no other natural motion. The ascent of fire tells us its element is above; and spirits naturally incline to spirits, and holy spirits peculiarly are inclined to the holy.

XIV. I am sure, 1. By understanding that I understand, and by willing that I will, &c. 2. I am sure by these acts, that I have the power or faculties to do them : for none doth that which it cannot do. 3. And I know that it is a substance that hath these powers : for nothing can do nothing.

My soul, then, being certainly an intellectual, volitive, vital substance, 1. I have no reason to think, that God, who annihilateth not the least sand, will annihilate so noble a substance.

2. Nor that he will destroy those powers which are its essential form, and turn it into some other thing.

3. Nor that such essential powers shall lie as dead and unactive, and so be continued in vain.

4. There remaining, therefore, nothing uncertain to natural reason, but the continuance of individuation to separate souls. 1. Apparitions and witches have put that out of doubt, notwithstanding many fables and delusions. 2. Christ hath put it more out of doubt. 3. While substance, faculties, and acts continue, it is the error of our selfish state in flesh, which maketh any fear too near an union, which shall end our individuation. The greatest union will be the greatest perfection, and no loss to souls.

XV. God's wonderful providences for the church and single saints on earth are such as tell us of that love and care, which will bring them afterwards to him.

XVI. The nature of God taketh off the terror of my departure much ; I am sure I shall die at the will, and into the hand, of infinite essential love and goodness ; whose love should draw up my longing soul.

XVII. I am going to a God whose mercies have long told me, that he loveth me better than my dearest friend doth, and better than I love myself, and is a far better chooser of my lot.

XVIII. As he hath absolute right to dispose of his own, so indeed the fulfilling of his will is the ultimate end of all things, and therefore most desirable in itself : and his will shall be fulfilled on me.

XIX. I go to a glorified Savior, who came down to fetch me up, and hath conquered and sanctified death, and made it my birth-day for glory, and taketh me for his dear-bought own and interest, and is in glory ready to receive his own.

XX. I go to that Savior who, on the cross, commendeth his spirit into his Father's hand, and taught me, with dying Stephen, to say, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

XXI. I go no solitary, untrodden way, but follow all the faithful since the death of Abel, to this day, (save Enoch and Elias,) who all went by death into that glorious world, where I shall find them.

XXII. I have so long groaned under a languid body, and in a blind, distracted, and (by man) uncurable world, where Satan, by lies, malice, and murder, reigneth in—alas! how many; and especially am so weary of my own darkness, and sinful imperfection, that I have great reason to be willing of deliverance.

XXIII. I have had so large a share of mercies in this world already, in time, and manifold comforts from God, that reason commandeth me to rest in God's time for my removal.

XXIV. I shall leave some fruits, not useless, to serve the church when I am gone: and if good be done, I have my end.

XXV. When I am gone, God will raise up and use others to do his appointed work on earth: and a church shall be continued to his praise: and the spirits in heaven will rejoice therein.

XXVI. When I am gone, I shall not wish to be again on earth.

XXVII. Satan, by his temptations, and all his instruments, would never have done so much as he doth in the world to keep us from heaven, if there were not a heaven which conquerors obtain.

XXVIII. When darkness and uncertainty of the manner of the action and fruition of separated souls would daunt me, it is enough to know explicitly so much as is explicitly revealed, and implicitly to trust Christ with all the rest: our eyes are in our Head, who knoweth for us? Knowledge of glory is part of fruition: and therefore we must expect here no more than is suited to a life of faith.

XXIX. All my part is to do my own duty, and then trust God; obeying his commanding will, and fully and joyfully resting in his disposing and rewarding will. There is no rest for souls but in the will of God, and there with full trust to repose our souls, in life, and at death, is the only way of a safe and comfortable departure.

XXX. The glorious marriage-day of the Lamb cannot now be far off, when the number of the elect shall be complete, and Christ

will come with his glorious angels, and will be glorified in his saints, and admired in all believers, and there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; and that kingdom shall come, where that which God hath prepared for them that love him, eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to have a formal, full conception of it.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly. Amen.

Fear not then, O my soul, to lay down this flesh : mercy hath kept it up for my preparing work ; but, oh, what a burdensome and chargeable companion hath it been ! Is it better than the dwelling-place of perfect spirits ? Oh, what are my groans, and all my cold and faint petitions, and my dull thanksgiving, to their harmonious, joyful praise ? If a day in God's courts be better than a thousand, what is a day, yea, what is everlastingness in the heavenly society and work. Oh, how hateful a thing is darkness and unbelief, when the remnants of them thus stop poor souls in their ascent, and make us half unwilling to go home ! What ! unwilling to be with my glorified Lord ! Unwilling to be with saints and angels, who are all life, and light, and love ! Unwilling to see the glory of Jehovah ! O foolish, sinful soul ! hath Christ done so much to purchase the heavenly glory for thee, and now art thou unwilling to go into the possession of it ? Hast thou been seeking, and praying, and laboring and suffering so many years, for that which now thou seemeth scarce willing to obtain ? Dost thou not judge thyself unworthy of eternal life, when thou no more desirest to enjoy it ? All this is along of thy too much adherence unto self and sense : thou art still desiring sensitive satisfaction, and not content to know thy part, wouldest know that for thyself which Christ knoweth for thee ; as if thou couldest better trust thyself than him. Fear not, weak soul, it is our Father's good pleasure to give thee the kingdom : trust infinite power, wisdom and love : trust that faithful, gracious Savior who hath so wonderfully merited to be trusted : trust that promise which never deceived any one, and which is confirmed by so many miracles, and by the oath, and by the Spirit of God. Whenever thou departest from this house of flesh, the arms of mercy are open to embrace thee ; yea, essential, transcendent love is ready to receive thee : the Spirit of love hath sealed thee to

that blessed state : Christ will present thee justified and accepted. Most of my old, holy, familiar friends are gone before me, and all the rest that died since the world began. And the few imperfect ones left behind are hasting after them apace, and if I go before, will quickly overtake me : though they weep as if it were for a long separation, it is their great mistake : the gate of death stands all day open, and my sorrowful friends are quickly following me, as I am now following those for whom I sorrowed. Oh, pity them who are left a while under the temptations, dangers, and fears, which have so long been thine own affliction ! but be not afraid of the day of thy deliverance, and the bosom of everlasting love, and the society of the wise, and just, and holy, and of the end of all thy troubles, and the entrance into the joy of thy Lord, and the place and state of all thy hope. Oh, say, not notionally only, as from argumentative conviction, but confidently, and with glad desire and hope, to depart and be with Christ, is far better than to be here.

But, O my God, I have much more hope in speaking to thee than to myself. Long may I plead with this dark and dull, yet fearful soul, before I can plead it into joyful hopes and heavenly desires, unless thou shine on it with the light of thy countenance, and thou, whom my soul must trust and love, wilt give me faith and love themselves. I thank thee for convincing arguments : but had this been all the strength of my faith and hope, the tempter might have proved too subtle for me in dispute. I thank thee that some experience tells me that a holy appetite to heavenly work, and a love to the heavenly company and state, doth more to make me willing to die, and think with pleasure of my change, than ever bare arguments would have done. Oh, send down the streams of thy love into my soul, and that will powerfully draw it up by longings for the near and full fruition ! Oh, give me more of the divine and heavenly nature, and it will be natural and easy to me to desire to be with thee : send more of the heavenly joys into this soul, and it will long for heaven, the place of joy ! I must not hope on earth for any such acquaintance with the world above as is proper to the enjoying state. But if the sun can send its illuminating, warming rays, to such a world as this, according to the various disposition of the recipients ; doubtless thou hast thy effect-

al, though unsearchable, ways of illuminating, sanctifying, and attractive influence on souls. And one such beam of thy pleased face, one taste of thy complacential love, will kindle my love, and draw up my desires, and make my pains and sickness tolerable ; I shall then put off this clothing with the less reluctancy, and willingly leave my flesh to the dust, and sing my *nunc dimittis*, when I have thus seen and tasted thy salvation. O my God, let not thy strengthening, comforting grace now forsake me, lest it should overwhelm me with the fears of being finally forsaken. Dwell in me as the God of love and joy, that I may long to dwell in love and joy with thee forever. As grace abounded where sin abounded, let thy strengthening and comforting mercy abound when weakness increaseth, and my necessities abound. My flesh and my heart faileth, but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever : this short life is almost at an end ; but thy loving-kindness is better than life : I know not with what pains thou wilt further try me ; but if I love thee, thou hast promised that all things shall work together for my good. The world that I am going to by death is not apparent to my sight ; but my life is hid with Christ in God, and, because he liveth, we shall live ; and we shall be with him where he is ; and when he appeareth, we shall appear with him in glory ; and shall enter into our Master's joy, and be forever with the Lord. Amen.

What sensible manifestation of his kingdom Christ gave in his transfiguration.

Sect. 1. Our Lord, who brought life and immortality to light, well knew the difficulty of believing so great things unseen : and therefore it pleased him to give men some sensible helps by demonstration. In Matt. xvi. and xvii. 1, 2, &c. ; Mark ix. 1 ; Luke ix. 28, he promised some of the disciples a sight of his kingdom as coming in power ; or such a glimpse as Moses had of the back parts of God's glory : this he performed first in his transfiguration, as afterward in his resurrection, ascension, and sending the Holy Ghost to enable them, with power, to preach, and work miracles, and convert the nations.

Sect. 2. By the kingdom of God, is meant God's government of his holy ones, by a heavenly communication of life, light, and love,

initially, on earth by grace, and perfectly in heaven by glory. A special theocracy.

Sect. 3. For the understanding of this we must know, that when God had made man good, in his image, he conversed with him in a heavenly manner, either immediately, or by an angel, speaking to him, and telling him his will. But man being made a free, self-determining agent, he was left to choose whom he would follow : and hearkening unto Satan, and turning from God, he became a slave of Satan, and gave him advantage to be his deceiving ruler : not that man's rebellion nullified God's power, or disposing government, or took man from under obligation to obedience ; but that, forsaking God, he was much, though not wholly, forsaken by his special, fatherly, approving government, and left to Satan and his own will : but the eternal Word, interposing for man's reprival and redemption, undertook to break the serpent's head, and to conquer and cast out him that had deceived and captivated man ; and, choosing out a special seed, he made them a peculiar people, and set up a heavenly, prophetic government over them, himself, by heavenly revelation, making their laws, and choosing their chief governors under him, from time to time, and would not leave it to blind and sinful man to make laws, or choose princes, for themselves, but would keep them in a special dependence upon heaven. But the carnal Israelites having provoked God by odious idolatry, to deny them much of the benefit of government (save when they repented, and cried to him for help) they thought to amend this by choosing a king like other nations, and ending their dependence on heavenly relation, and choice for government : and so theocracy was turned into a more human regiment, and God more cast off : though yet he would not quite forsake them. And the rest of the world was yet more left under the power of Satan, and their own corrupted mind and will ; so that Satan hath both an internal kingdom in wicked souls, and a visible political government of the wicked kingdoms of the world, ruling them by men that are ruled by him. And as Christ came to cast him out of men's hearts by his sanctifying, conquering Spirit, so also to cast him out of the political Government of the kingdoms of the world, and to bring them under the laws, and officers, and Spirit of Christ, and rule them by heavenly power and

love as his own kingdoms, that he may bring them to perfection in one celestial kingdom at last. And in this sense we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Sect. 4. To make men believe that he is the heavenly King sent from God, to cast down Satan's kingdom, was the great business of the preaching of the gospel: this he would demonstrate, as by all his miracles which showed him to have the victory of devils, and to be the Lord of life, so also by visible apparition in glory. And it is said, (1 John v. 7, 8,) that there are three witnesses in heaven and three in earth, so here Christ would have three heavenly and three earthly witnesses of his transfiguration. From heaven he had the witness, 1. Of a voice, proclaiming "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him." 2. Of Moses, the chief law-giver. 3. And of Elias, the chief prophet; to tell us, that the law and the prophets are his prognosticating witnesses: but "hear him" notifieth to us, that Christ and his gospel are to be heard above the law and the prophets, and to teach us more than they could teach us: the law was given by Moses (with its types and shadows) but grace and truth (the substance so typified) are by Jesus Christ.

Sect. 5. Light and glory are often of the same signification. Christ was transfigured into a lucid, glorious appearance of body: he tells us by this, that he would have us have some sort of idea of his kingdom, fetched from sense; many apparitions of angels have been in lights. Christ appeared to Saul in a visible light. (Acts ix.) So did he to John. (Rev. i, &c.) God and the Lamb are the light of the New Jerusalem. It is an inheritance of the saints in light.

Some seem to me to think too basely of sense, and too far to separate it from intellectual spirits, both as to power, act, and object: and all because they find it in lower creatures. They might accordingly deny substantiality to spirits, because brutes are substances; the higher have all the perfections of the lower, either formally or eminently. It is not a spirit's perfection to be insensible, or to have nothing to do with sensible things, but to be eminently sensible, and to be superior agents on lower sensibles. God is love: and love is complacency: and a high degree of complacency is delight or joy. So that God is essential, infinite joy, but without that drossy quality which is proper

to souls in flesh, and all that imperfection which belongs to creatures. Can we tell what it is to enter into our Master's joy, or joyfully to love and praise him, without any sense? I rather think, that as vigorous youth makes men capable of more delight than decrepit, languid, painful age and sickness, so heaven shall, by perfecting our natures, make them capable of inconceivably more joy than any on earth is capable of.

And as we shall have sense in exaltation as to power and act, so shall we have sensible objects. God himself delighteth in all his works, and so shall we. We must not, on pretence of taking the heavenly Jerusalem to be merely spiritual, deprive ourselves of all the sensible ideas of it which God's description offereth to us. Light is sensible; Christ glorified there is sensible; Moses and Elias were sensible to Peter, James, and John. Lazarus and Abraham were sensible to the man in hell. (Luke xvi.) Stephen saw heaven open, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. And all eyes shall see him at his glorious return. Heavenly glory is not enjoyed only by mere thinking and knowing, nor as in a dream, but by the most eminent intellectual sensation, exalted and invigorated.

Sect. 6. Say not then, O my soul that this kingdom of glory is so far above thee, that thou canst have no idea of it. Think not that it is therefore unmeet for thy desiring and joyful hopes, because thou canst not know what it is. Hast thou no conception of the difference between light and darkness? If thou hadst been but one year kept in absolute darkness wouldst thou have no desiring thought of light? The blind think themselves half dead while they are alive. Indeed, the faculty and object must be suitable; light may be too great for our weak eyes, as heat may be torment in an unsuitable degree; but when our souls are perfected, they will be suitable recipients of a more glorious light than we can here endure. Moses is not there covered in a cleft of the rock, because he could see but as the back part of God's glory. We must see here but as in a glass, but there as face to face. Though these organical eyes, as spectacles, shall be laid by, we shall have media more perfect, suitable to our perfect state.

And as I can think of heaven as a region of glorious light, so I think of it as a place and state of life and love. I know some of the difference of life and death, and that a living dog is better a dead lion. And I have felt what it is to love my friends, and the to desire their new communion as my delight; and can I then have no idea of that world, where life, light, and joyful love are the element of souls, as water is to the fishes?

And as I can have some idea of that state in general, so may the state of the perfected spirits of the just which are there. They are connatural to their proper element. They are essential, created by life, light, and love. And they want not substance to be the basis of those formal powers, nor objects on which to exercise them. Think not, then, that heaven is so far inconceivable, as not by the mind to be thought of. If we have no conception of it, we can have no desires of it, and no delightful hope. What can we conceive more certainly than of life, and light, and love; of a region, and persons essentiated of these? Do we not know what knowledge is, and see what light is, and feel what life and love are?

But it is true that our conceptions hereof are lamentably imperfect, and so they must be till possession, fruition, and exercise, perfect them. Who knoweth what light or sight is, but by seeing; or what knowledge is, but by knowing; or what love and joy are, but by loving and rejoicing? And who knows what perfect sight, knowledge, love, and joy are, but by perfect seeing, knowing, loving, and rejoicing? No man by an intuitive or immediate perception. But some abstract conceptions of it we may have by reasoning deduction from a poor degree which we here in the kingdom of grace possess.

Can I perceive substantiality in the dark terrene appearances which are but mutable lifeless matter agitated and used by invisible powers, and shall I think of those unseen, powerful substances, as if they were less substantial for being spiritual, or were not objects of a knowing thought? Are the stars which I see less substantial than a carcass in a darksome grave? The Lord that appeared in shining glory hath members in their measure like himself; and hath promised that we shall shine as stars in the kingdom of his Father. In some degree of this be here performed in them who are called

children of light, and the lights of the world, how much more will they shine in the world of light? They that call light a quality, or an act, must confess it hath a substance whose quality or act it is. Alas! what a deceived thing is a sensual unbeliever, who spendeth his life in the pursuit of fugitive shadows, and walketh in a vain show, and thinks of spiritual, glorious substances, as if they were the nothings or delusions of a dream.

Sect. 6. Christ, Moses, and Elias, here visibly appeared as three distinct, individual persons. This tells us that it is a false conceit that death ceaseth individuation, and turneth all souls into one (of which before); perfect, indivisible, infinite unity is proper to God; from this one is multiplicity. Reason forbids us, when we see the numberless individuals in this world, and see also the numerous stars above, to imagine that all the worlds above us have so much of divine perfection, as to be but one undivided substance, and to have no multiplicity of inhabitants. Yea, some of those Sadducees hold that the stars are worlds inhabited as the earth is. And why then should they think whithersoever souls go, that they cease their individuation, when they go among individuals? But Christ hath confuted them even to sense. Moses is Moses still, and Elias is Elias still; and all our friends that are gone to Christ are the same still that they were, and may be called by the same names. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the same in heaven; and Lazarus was Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. When we lay by flesh, and are unclothed, we put not off our personalities. Every one shall receive his own reward according to what he hath done in the body, when every one must give account of his own works and talents.

Why then may not I, with distinct conceptions and joyful desires, look after the souls of my departed friends, that are now in the celestial kingdom? Though malignity hath scorned me for naming some few in my 'Saints' Rest,' being such as the despisers hated, yet I forbear not, on such accounts, to solace myself by naming more, but because they are more than it is fit to number. In all places where I have lived, how many excellent souls (though here they were not perfect) are gone to Christ. How sweet is the remembrance of the communion which I had with many of them in Shrews-

bury, and other parts of Shropshire; of many at Dudley, and the adjoining parts; of multitudes at Kidderminster, Bewdley, and other parts of Worcestershire; of abundance at Coventry, and other parts of Warwickshire; and of many where I have sojourned in other parts of the land; and, above all, in London, and the adjoining parts. As Mr. Howe hath elegantly expressed it, in his excellent character of my excellent and dear friend, Mr. Richard Fairclough: what a multitude of blessed saints will arise at the last day out of London. And this earth is, as it were, hallowed with the dust and relics of so many blessed souls. But it is heaven that is spangled with these spiritual stars; the place honored with them, and they with it, and all by Christ. We are like infants, or lambs, or other young ones, that cry but for their dams if they be out of sight; though they are ever so near, if they see them not, they cry as if they were not, or had forsaken them. As Christ told his disciples, that it was needful for them that he departed from them, and yet their hearts for this were sorrowful, till the Holy Ghost came upon them, as better than Christ's fleshly presence, to prepare them joyfully to follow him; so we think of our friends as almost lost to us by separation, till the heavenly Spirit tell us where they are, and prepare us to desire to be with them.

Sect. 6. Elias hath a body now in heaven, and so hath Enoch; but can we think that only two or three that are there with Christ do so much differ from all the rest, as to have bodies when the rest have none? Is there such a dissimilitude of saints in heaven? What are two or three in such a society? Doubtless their bodies are not corruptible flesh and blood, but such spiritual bodies as all saints shall have at the resurrection. But are they in heaven such visible and shaped bodies as they appeared on the mount? The same difficulty poseth us about the risen body of Christ: he would not have Mary touch him, because he had not yet ascended to his Father; he could appear and vanish from their sight at his pleasure; and yet Thomas handled him, and felt that he had flesh and bones. That body of flesh ascended visibly up towards heaven; and yet it is not flesh and blood in heaven, but a spiritual body: for it is not worse than he will make his members. What shall we say to these things?

We must say, that we are not capable of knowing them, but have reason to be thankful that we may know so much, more necessary for us. But yet it seemeth probable that the bodies of Christ, and Enoch, and Elias, were changeable according to the region in which they were to be. Christ could take up a body of flesh and blood, and immediately change that state of it into a pure and incorruptible, spiritual body, as it entered into the incorruptible, spiritual region. And so God did by Enoch and Elias. As Paul saith, that we shall not all die, (those that live till Christ's appearing) but we shall all be changed. And yet if Elias have business on the mount, he can put on the clothing of a grosser body to be seen of men, and can lay it by, or return to his more invisible, spiritual state, when he returneth to the place from whence he came. And no wonder, when angels (and the ancients say Christ, before his incarnation) assumed bodies suitable to their several businesses on earth; yea, such as could eat and drink with men; when they dwelt not in heaven so coarsely clothed.

Sect. 7. But how came Moses to have a body on the mount, who is said to have been buried, and therefore took none with him into heaven? We must still remember, that we inquire of things above our certain knowledge. But in humble conjecture we may say, that it is no more impossible for Moses to assume such a body as he appeared in on the mount, for that occasion, than for angels to appear in human shapes; and departed souls too, as many apparitions have told men. And if bad souls can do it, why not good ones, when God will have it? The tradition seemeth but a Jewish dream, that God kept the body of Moses uncorrupted in the grave; and that this was it that the devil is said to strive for against Michael, that the body might be corrupted. And say others, that at this transfiguration it rose again. There need no such conceits to our satisfaction. The soul of Moses could assume a body.

Sect. 8. But still the dissimilitude of Enoch and Elias from all the saints in heaven is an unresolved difficulty. If we knew that God would have it so, it might satisfy us. But there is a symmetry in the body of Christ. And it is like that the same region hath inhabitants of the same nature. What shall we think, then, that Enoch

and Elias, at their entrance into those regions, laid by their bodies, and became such as Abraham, and other holy souls? Why are they taken up to be so laid by? The corruptibility, no doubt, they did lay by. God knoweth, but it is much unknown to us. Or shall we think as all those fathers cited by Faustus Regiensis, and as *Dr. More*, and some of late, that all spirits are souls, and animate some bodies; and so that all in heaven have some bodies. If so, what bodies are they; and how differ they from the resurrection state? As the soul here operateth in and by the igneous spirits in our bodies, it may be so lodged in these as to take some of them with it at death, as the life of a dying plant, yet dieth not in the seed. And a man may be said to go unclothed to bed, though he put not off his shift or nearest garment, and to be clothed again when he puts on the rest. And at the resurrection, as there will be a new heaven and earth, so spirits now in heaven may have much more delightful business on the new and righteous earth than now they have, and therefore may have use for an additional body, as much differing from what they have now in heaven, as the new earth and their employment there require; and as the seed doth differ from the plant. And spirits being communicative, will be more happy by more communication. As God delighteth to do good to all his works, so the souls now confined to heaven will delight to be employed in doing good to the new earth, and to animate the bodies suited to such work; though now they have use for no other than such spiritual, lucid receptacles as are fit for the regions where they dwell. And it will be no debasement or dejection for a spirit now in heaven to animate a body at the resurrection fit for the new earth; no more than it was to angels to speak to Adam, and to Moses, to Abraham, Jacob, Manoah, and others; or than it is to the sun to enlighten and enliven things on earth.

It is a foolish thing to think, as some do, that departed souls will be as dormant and unactive as in apoplectic or sleeping persons, for want of organized bodies to act in. Spirits are essentially active, intellective, and volitive; and will God continue such essential powers in vain? Moses and Elias wanted not bodies; and those in heaven can praise Jehovah and the Lamb with holy, concordant love and joy; whether in any sort of ethereal bodies, or without, we shall shortly know.

Sect 8. It is said that Moses and Elias talked with Christ; this sheweth that Christ hath familiar communion with the blessed. He that would come into flesh on earth, and live with man in an humbled state, and refused not familiar converse with poor men and women, and would eat and drink with publicans and sinners, will not refuse everlasting near familiarity with the glorified. If the church be his dearly beloved spouse, and as it were one with him, as his body, surely he will be no stranger to the least and lowest member of it.

Sect. 9. But what was it that they talked about? Luke (ix. 31) saith "They appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." This was not to make it known to Christ, who came into the world to die for sin; what then was it for? Did Christ tell them of it, as not knowing it before? That is not likely neither. Did he need their comfort, as angels in his trials ministered to him and strengthened him? The particular uses of this speech we know not; but in general we know it was somewhat preparatory to his great sufferings and death.

And must Christ's sufferings and death have such preparation, and must not mine have such premeditation? And do I not need the consolatory messages of God? Carnal men would rather have chosen pleasanter discourse, than the talk of sufferings and death. But that which must be undergone, and requireth greatest strength, must be forethought of, and requireth the most preparing thoughts. It is worse than madness to be surprised with sufferings and death, before it is seriously forethought of. So sharp a trial, and so great a change, require the greatest preparation. He that can refuse to suffer and die, may refuse to talk or think of it. If Christ must have men from heaven to talk with him of his cross, what cause have we to study the cross; even all our lives to forsee it, and, by obedient consent, to submit unto it, and take it up to follow Christ, and even to determine, with Paul, to know nothing in the world but Christ and him crucified; that is, to take this for the only needful and excellent learning? But, alas! how senselessly is death and suffering talked of till it comes! We are to learn how to suffer when suffering is upon us; and to learn how to die when nature, or the physi-

cian, passes the sentence of death on us at hand. And it is God's mercy to some of us to ~~make~~ our sufferings long, that we may have a competent time of learning. As we learn to write by writing, and to discourse by discoursing, and every art and trade by practice; even so by suffering we learn to suffer, and the lesson is very hard. Malefactors suffer without learning, whether they will or not; but to suffer obediently, with child-like affections, is the lesson to be learned. Oh! little, too little, do many honest Christians think how much of their excellent obedience consisteth in child-like, holy suffering; therefore they little expect it, and provide for it; and then they are overwhelmed with the unexpected surprisal when it comes. Even in the suffering which men bring on the faithful for righteousness' sake, how many shrink, and shift off their duty, or venture on forbidden things for safety because they were not prepared for it. The loss of goods, or imprisonment and want, seem to many almost insufferable trials. But I can tell such, by some experience, that bodily pain and torment is a far greater trial, which none of them are secured from, and requireth greater strength of faith obediently to accept it at the hand of God: and others can tell them that the violence of temptations, and the terrors of God on a wounded conscience, and troubled soul, are yet far harder than all these: and these are the saddest, because they make the mind unfit at present to improve them, and to refer them to holy ends and uses. Christ, in all his agony, and even when he cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" had his intellects free and perfect, to know the nature, the reason, the uses, and end of all his sufferings: but so have not many poor, distressed, troubled, distracted souls. O how great a part of Christianity is it to understand and rightly bear the cross! Most of our care is how to escape it, or to be delivered from it, rather than obediently to bear it.

Sect. 10. Experience of a suffering, painful state is a great help to our understanding of the gospel. It taketh off from me the scandal of Christ's cross, and helpeth me to perceive the great use and reasons of it, when I am under sufferings. Oh! what need have I of such an example as Christ's. All the parts of his sufferings

are as useful to teach me how to suffer, as the ten commandments to teach me what to do. That he was ~~not~~ to fly from proud, domineering pharisees, false teachers, and worldly rulers, and to converse most with the poor, in wildernesses, or various obscure places; that he was hated and persecuted for doing good, and accounted a sinner for neglecting men's ceremonies and traditions; that he was hardly believed, even by them that saw his miracles; and his own disciples were so slow in learning; and that in his suffering they all forsook him and fled, and one denied him with oaths and curses: all these are instructing instances. That Christ's natural, though sinless, aversation to death and suffering, and his fear, should be so powerful, and the sense of God's punishing justice so terrible, as to make his soul sorrowful, even to the death, and cast him into an agony, where he sweat water and blood, and to pray thrice that the bitter cup, if possible, might pass from him, which he came into the world to drink: all these also are teaching parts of the sufferings of Christ, that rulers, and priests, and soldiers, and the rabble, should agree to scorn him, clothe him in derision, spit on him, buffet him, scourge him, make their jest, that came to save them: that they should make a sinner of him that never sinned, but came to destroy it, and save men from it; yea, to make him no less than a deceiver, a blasphemer, and an usurping rebel against Cæsar, and write this last as his accusation on his cross, thinking to leave his innocency no vindication or defence. For the Lord and Savior of the world to undergo all this, is very instructing to a suffering believer: that he should, as such a malefactor, be reviled on a cross, and numbered with transgressors, and his side be pierced, and he there cry out to his Father as forsaken by him; that thus dying he was buried, and his soul went to the place of separated souls, and yet into paradise. They are excellent lessons which may be learned from all this.

I am not to suffer for others, nor to make God's justice a satisfying sacrifice for sin, as Christ did; but I must suffer God's fatherly corrections, and the castigation of paternal, healing justice. I must be saved as by fire, and pass through this purgatory, that I may be refined: I must suffer from Christ and for Christ, for my sin, and also for righteousness' sake: and I must, with a filial justification of God's

holiness and chastening justice, bear his indignation, because I have sinned against him. I am predestined to be conformed to Christ's image, in suffering and in sanctity; (Rom. viii. 30, &c.,) yea, I must "count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," for whom I must not refuse to suffer the loss of all things, and count them dung, that I may win him, and be found in him, and not only know the power of his resurrection, but also the "fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death." (Phil. iii. 8—10.) Paul rejoiced in such infirmities, and in his suffering for the church, filling up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh. (Col. i. 24.) Peter bids us "rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter iv. 13.) "If we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him." (Rom. viii. 17.) It is a great gift to suffer for his sake. (Phil. i. 29.) It is for the kingdom of God that such suffer. (2 Thess. i. 5.) It is happiness and joy to suffer for righteousness' sake, for well doing. (1 Pet. ii. 10; and iii. 14, 17; and iv. 15, 16, 19: Matt. v. 10, 11.) It is the sufferings of Christ that abound in such, that their consolations may abound. (2 Cor. i. 5.)

But, alas! I suffer much more for my own sin than for Christ and righteousness: but even this also by the cross of Christ is sanctified, and made a great remedy against my sin. As Christ suffered for our sins, and yet merited by his suffering; so if we accept the castigatory punishment, and exercise repentance and mortification in our suffering, and an obedient submission to the rod, God will take this as acceptable service, and bless it to our further good.

Sect. 11. But how is it that Christ is said "to learn obedience by the things that he suffered, and so to be made perfect." (Heb. v. 8, 9.) Was he unlearned and imperfect before? He had no culpable imperfection; but his satisfactory mediation was imperfect till it was all performed: it was not perfectly done; and when it was done, he thereby was constitutively made a perfect Mediator: as he said upon the cross, "It is finished;" and as this human nature received additional acts of knowledge, as he grew up, and conversed with more objects, and so is said to increase in wisdom (as Adam

knew the creatures when he saw them); so he had a new acquaintance with obedient suffering, when he was under the experience of it; and is said to learn it, in that he now exercised it.

And should not my suffering be God's school? Should I not learn obedience by it? Surely, as it smartly tells me of the evil of former disobedience, so it calls me to remember in whose hands I am, and with whom I have to do, and what is my duty in such a state: God can do no wrong to his own: he will do nothing finally hurtful to his children. In all our afflictions he is said to be afflicted, to signify that he afflicts not willingly, or without our provocation. Justice is good, and holiness is good; and it is good for us to repent, and be weaned from the flesh and world: and all good must be loved, and the means as such. Sharp, heart-breaking sermons are unpleasant to nature; and yet to be loved for their use: and afflictions are God's powerful sermons: the proud and hardened are forced to hear them, who scorn and prosecute preachers for speaking the same things: and shall believers under sufferings be untaught? Words are but words, but stripes go by forcible sense unto the heart: obedient submission to the greatest pains is a serious acknowledgment of God's dominion, and of his wisdom and love, and the certain hopes of a better life. Impatience hath in it somewhat of atheism, or blasphemy: God is not duly acknowledged and honored. Job's wife would have had him thus purposely provoke God, to end his misery by death: as if she had said, 'Speak no more well of him, by whom thou sufferest so much, nor honor a God that will not help thee.' But patience saith, "I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." (Mic. vii. 7.)

Impatience sheweth a misunderstanding of God's dealing with the afflicted; but patience yieldeth, because it understandeth whence all comes, and what will be the fruit and end. A man that is let blood for his life, is not impatient with the chirurgeon; but a beast will strive, and a swine or child will cry.

Our burdens are heavy enough of themselves; impatience maketh them heavier, and is oft more painful than the thing which we suffer: some have gone mad with crosses, which to another would

have been light. Patience is our cordial and *nepenthes*, yea, the health of the soul, by which it is able to bear its infirmities. "In our patience we possess our souls." (Luke xxi. 19.) Whatever else we lose, we lose not ourselves. He that keepeth his faith, and hope, and love by patience, keepeth his soul : but the impatient lose themselves, as if their other losses were not enough. A poor man singeth that gets his living only by his daily labor ; when a lord or knight would be tormented with sorrow, if he were reduced to his degree. Striving under our yoke and burden maketh it gall the more : and we cannot so hopefully or comfortably pray for deliverance from the pain which we make ourselves, as from that which God layeth on us ; though also there, we must pray for the grace that must save us from our own impatience.

Patience preventeth many sins which impatience causeth ; hard thoughts of God, if not hard and unseemly words : "Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly : " impatience tempteth men to think that piety and prayer are in vain, and to condemn the generation of the just, and to leave off duty, and say, 'Why should I wait on God any longer ?' Yea, and to venture on false and sinful means, in hopes of deliverance and ease.

Were it to men, we have much to allay our impatience : but impatience against God hath no just excuse. Infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, can do nothing that deserveth blame : we have God's promise that all things shall work together for our good : and is he not to be trusted ? Or is the means of our good to be accused ?

Impatience is unseemly for them that believe that heavenly rest and glory are at hand ? where all their pains and sorrows will end. Were a man on the rack, and were sure to have all that he desired after it, he would the more easily endure it. Why else did the martyrs so patiently suffer ? It is incongruous to complain of any thing that brings a man to heaven.

Christ himself was innocent, and yet accused not God for his sufferings. But we suffer justly for our faults ; and it is so much less than they deserve, that the sins which we suffer most for are said to be forgiven us, in that the everlasting punishment is forgiven. Should we so often sinfully please the flesh, and yet must it not smart ?

Shall we so often grieve the Spirit of God, and not be grieved? Shall we lose our time, neglect our duty, forget our home, fall in love with the world, and yield to temptations, and defile our souls with filth and vanity, and must not correction tell us of our sinful folly? "If we suffer for our faults, and bear it patiently, it is not thankworthy." (1 Pet. ii. 20.)

Our merciful Father doth use to shame us for our impatience, by the blessed end of our afflictions. The end that God made with Job showed the reasonableness of his patience. When our afflictions are over, do not all believers see cause of thankfulness for them, and say, 'It is good for me that I was afflicted?' The pain is past, and the benefit remaineth. And if all that is past was mercy to us, why should we much fear that which is to come. Heaven will end all, and shame impatience forever.

Our patience is much of our perseverance: what a deal of labor do those impatient men lose, that learn, and pray, and are somewhat religious, and have not patience at the last assault to bear the trial, but fail when they seemed to be near the crown!

Hold out then poor desponding soul! lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and run with patience the race which is set before thee, looking to Jesus, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. God will not deceive thy hopes. Sin hath brought pain and death on man; but Christ hath sanctified it, and is the Lord of Life. Yet a little while, and the heavenly possession shall turn thy sorrows into everlasting joy, and thy moans and groans into thanks and praise, and there shall be no more sickness, pain, or death. O foolish, unbelieving hearts! that cry out of suffering, and fear deliverance; that would fain be free from all affliction, and yet fly from the only state of freedom; that are impatient under their calamity, and yet afraid of passing to the only rest!

Sect. 12. But it is neither pain alone, nor death alone, that will sufficiently try our strength, and exercise our faith and patience. It must be great pain (and often long) in order to a certain, expected death. These two conjunct were the case of Christ. The torment of his agony, scourging, crucifying, piercing, and desertion, and the certainty of death that followed. Great pains, with hopes of recov-

ery and ease may be borne, even by a worldly man; because there is still the worldly hope of better: and so there is no denial of all, while life itself is not denied. We must receive the sentence of death in ourselves, if we will find that we trust in God alone, and trust him as one that raiseth the dead, that is, for another and better life.

As long as a man hath any hope of life and ease, a man's faith is not tried to the uttermost, by actual forsaking all. And yet an easy death alone doth not fully try a man: for they that know that all must die, may submit to this, who cannot bear long pains before it. But great and long pains, and the sentence of death together, are the trial.

And if God will so try me, why should I repine? Flesh will groan, but the mind may obediently submit. It is but flesh; that flesh that hath tempted and imprisoned my soul. I have too much loved it, and am too loth to leave it: and is it not mercy from God to make me weary of it? God is engaged against idols, that is, all that is loved and pleased before him; and if any thing, that is likeliest to be this flesh. Its corruptibility tells us, that both its pleasure and its pain will be but short. Long pain is usually tolerable: and intolerable pain will conquer nature, and not be long. The grace of Christ is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifest in our weakness, when he will not take the thorn out of our flesh, though, as Christ and Paul did, we pray thrice, or oftener.

And to be impatient with death is to repine that we were born mortal men; and to fly from heaven and all true hopes, and all the felicity purchased by Christ: and is this renouncing the world, and trusting Christ for life everlasting? And why fear we that which endeth all our pains and fears? A true believer never suffereth so much, but his mercies are far more and greater than his sufferings. His soul is united to Christ: his hopes of heaven have a sure foundation: he is sealed up to glory: rest and joy are near at hand: and former mercies should not be forgotten; and should not such men patiently endure? O what a shameful contradiction is it, to choose heaven as our only portion, to believe in Christ for it, and to seek it as the business of all our lives, and yet to be loth to die, that we may

obtain it, and to fly with fear from that which we so seek and hope for! What a contradiction is it to call God our God and Father, the God of Love, and to call Christ our gracious, glorified Redeemer, and to fly from his presence with distrustful fear! Almighty love may correct us, may kill us, but it cannot finally hurt true believers.

So much of Moses' and Elias' discourse of the sufferings and death of Christ.

Sect. 13. Sure it is not true that the souls of the fathers, before Christ's coming, did not enter into heaven, but lay in some inferior *limbus*. For Moses and Elias came from heaven; their shining glory showed that, and their discourse with Christ, and the voice and glory that went with them. And it is not to be thought that they were separated from the rest of the souls of the faithful, and, with Enoch, were in heaven by themselves alone, and the rest elsewhere. Though it is said that God's house hath many mansions, and there are various degrees of glory, yet the blessed are all fellow-citizens of one society, and children in one family of God. And they that came from east and west, shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; and Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, and the believing thief with Christ in paradise.

Sect. 14. It seems that Moses and Elias appeared thus, to fore-show the resurrection of Christ, and of the faithful, and to make it easier to the three disciples to believe it. Why should they doubt whether Christ should rise, when they saw that Moses was risen before him? And why should they doubt of the resurrection of the faithful, and the glory following, when they saw these glorified saints? Some think that this apparition was for the strengthening of Christ himself, whose human nature had use for such minstry also of angels, but it is more certain that it was for the strengthening of the disciples' faith, and of ours by their testimony. As it is said, "This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes." (John xii. 30.)

Sect. 15. It is much worth our noting, in what a communion this specimen of the kingdom of heaven was represented in the holy mount. Here was a voice of God, and a glimpse of his glory: here was our Redeemer in a glimpse of his glory: here was a Moses and Elias in a glimpse of their glory: and here were three beloved disciples yet in the flesh, and in weakness of faith, which

needed such confirmation. God, our Father, and our Savior, the saints of heaven, and those on earth, are all of one society or kingdom. There is a near relation, and a near communion among them all. When the eternal Word disdained not so wonderful condescension as to come to us in the form of a servant, even of a poor, despised, crucified man, it is less wonder that Moses and Elias should come down as his witnesses and servants. The heavenly Jerusalem, and city of the living God, of which we are enrolled burgesses or heirs, hath many parts. There is the assembly of the first-born, and innumerable angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and God the Judge of all. (Heb. xii. 23, &c.) Oh, what holy, glorious, joyful company shall we have above! Christ and his angels will not despise the least of saints.

Sect. 16. But what was the introduction to this apparition and transfiguration? It was Christ's praying, "He went up into a mountain to pray, and, as he prayed, he was transfigured." (Luke ix, 28, 29.) Surely this is written to invite and encourage us to pray. We are in greater need than Christ. It is folly in unbelievers to think prayers vain, because God is unchangeable. We are not unchangeable: and the exercise of faith, dependence on God, and true desires, being the condition required in a due receiver, maketh those blessings become ours, which else we had been incapable of. God, who commandeth fervent prayer, hath promised to answer it. Though we must not think to be the rulers of the world, nor have whatever our flesh or folly doth desire, because we ask it earnestly, yet true prayer is the appointed way for obtaining what we need, and is best for us, and we are fitted to receive. And as Christ had this wonderful return to his prayers, his servants have experience that their choicest mercies for soul and body have come this way.

Sect. 17. Though the three disciples were admitted to this glorious society, how different was their case from that of Christ, and Moses, and Elias! In the beginning of the heavenly concourse, they were asleep with heaviness, even while this glorious company stood near them. Alas! such is our infirmity in flesh, and such a clog are these earthly bodies to us, that when God is present, and

heaven is before us, and we have the greatest cause to watch and pray, a heavy, weary, sluggish body, even^r fettereth an active spirit, and we sleep, or turn away in wandering thoughts, when we should seriously converse with Christ and heaven. Alas! what unworthy servants hath our Lord? Are such as these meet for his work, his love, his acceptance, or his kingdom? But oh, how merciful a Savior have we, who taketh not his poor servants at the worst, but when they have served him thus in his agony he gently rebuketh them; "Could you not watch with me one hour?" and that with an excuse, "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Sect. 18. It is a matter of great moment to understand in what cases this excuse will hold, and our weakness will not make the willingness of the Spirit unacceptable to God. If a drunkard, fornicator, or other sensualist should say, 'My spirit is willing to leave my sin, but my flesh is weak, and a temptation doth prevail,' *Video meliora proboque*, &c.; this excuse would not prove God's forgiveness. If a man live in known sin, which he could forbear were he truly willing, and say, "To will is present with me, but to do I am unable; it is not I, but sin, that dwelleth in me;" this would be but a frivolous excuse, and yet to the sleepy disciples it was a good excuse, and I think to Paul, Rom. vii. Where, then, is the difference? There are some acts of man which the will hath not power to rule, and some that it can rule. The will hath not power always to keep a sleepy man awake: this sleep might be of the flesh without any will at all: and this excuseth from all guilt. There are some acts of man which the will cannot rule, but by a great degree of power and endeavor; as perhaps, with much ado, by preventing and resisting diligence, the disciples might have kept awake: in this case, their sleep is a fault, but a pardoned fault of weakness. Some persons are liable to inordinate fear and grief, which so surpriseth them by the constitution of their bodies, that the greatest unwillingness would not hinder them. And some could do more to resist these passions than they do, but very hardly with the greatest diligence. These are accordingly excusable in degree. Paul would have perfectly obeyed God's law, and never have sinned. But there is no perfection in this life: mere imperfection of true grace, which is predominant in the

will doth not damn men. But there are acts which are so subject to the will, that a sincere will, though imperfect, can command them. He that doth these, (or doth the contrary,) it is not because he sincerely would, and cannot, but because he hath but ineffectual wishes, and is not sincerely willing, if he know them to be what they are; especially if they be materially great sins which he yieldeth to, which true grace more strongly resisteth than it doth an idle word, or thought, or action. In short, all omissions or commissions, in which the will is positively or privatively guilty, are sinful in some degree; but only these do damn the sinner, which are inconsistent with the predominant love of God, and heaven, and holiness, in the soul.

Sect. 19. When the disciples awaked, they saw these glorious ones in converse. Did they hear what they said, or did Christ after tell them? The latter is most probable. Doubtless, as Moses tells us how God made the world, which none could tell him but by God's telling them first, so the apostles have written many things of Christ which they neither saw nor heard, but from Christ, that told it them by word, or inspiration. How else knew they what Satan said and did to him in his temptations in the wilderness, and on the pinnacle of the temple? How knew they what his prayer was in his agony! And so in this instance also. But Christ's own testimony was enough to put them out of doubt, to them that daily saw his confirming miracles.

Sect. 20. How great a difference was there between mount Sinai and this mount? When God delivered the law to Moses, that mount was terrible in flame, and smoke, and thunder, so that the people trembled and fled: but now here is nothing but life, and light, and love from heaven. A merciful Redeemer, whose face shone as the sun, with heavenly company, appearing nearly to the disciples, pitying and bearing with their heaviness and infirmity, strengthening their faith and hope, and proving to them a resurrection, and a heavenly kingdom, by a visible apparition of some of its possessors. This was not a frightful but a confirming, delectable sight: the law in terror was by Moses, but grace and truth, peace and pleasure are by Christ.

This was an inviting and delighting, and not an affrighting, apparition. Was it not a shameful infirmity, and a sin, that Peter should deny Christ after such a sight as this, and the rest of his disciples forsake him and fly? What! after they had seen the kingdom of God come in power, and Christ's face shine as the sun in its brightness, could they forget all this? Or could they doubt whether he or his persecutors, were the stronger, and liker to prevail at last? O, how frail, how uncertain, how bad a thing, is depraved man?

But though Christ found them asleep, and though he foreknew that they would forsake him, he forsook not them, nor used them as they deserved, but comforted them with a glimpse of heaven: for he died for his enemies.

Sect. 21. But this was but once in all the time of his abode among them. It was an extraordinary feast, and not their daily bread: they had Christ still with them, but not transfigured in glory, nor Moses and Elias in their sight. We are too apt to think, that if God give us a joyful, extraordinary glimpse of heaven, we must have it always, or that he forsaketh us, and casts us off when he denieth it us. O that we were as desirous of holiness and duty as we are of the joy which is the reward! But our Father, and not we, must be the chooser both of our food and feast. Moses did not dwell on mount Nebo, that he might still see the land of promise: it was enough to have one sight of it before his death. As flesh and blood cannot enter into heaven, so it is little of heaven that entereth into it.

Sect. 22. When the disciples awake, they see his glory, and the two men that stood with them. It must not be a sleeping but an awakened Christian that will have a sight of heavenly glory. As we must love God with all the heart, and soul, and might, all must be awakened in seeking him, and in attending him, before we can have a joyful foretaste of his love. Carnal security, supine neglect, and dull contempt, are dispositions which render us incapable of such delights. Heavenly joy supposes a heavenly disposition and desires. Angels sleep not, nor are clogged with bodies of clay: earth hath no wings: it must be holy vivacity that must carry up a soul to God, notwithstanding the fetters of flesh. It is with each others souls in the body that we converse together on earth. And it is not sluggish,

but lively faith, and fervent desires, that must converse in heaven with Moses and Elias, and our living Head.

Sect. 23. But how did Peter know Moses and Elias, whom he had never seen before? Perhaps glorified saints do bear each one his notifying signature, and need not names and sound of words to make them known: perhaps Christ told the disciples who they were that talked with him: perhaps he made them know it by inspiration, as the prophets have their knowledge. Any of these ways God could notify them: it is not needful that we know which of them it was; but that they were known, is certain. We shall be no strangers to any saints in heaven, and therefore not to our old acquaintance. Whether we shall have any greater love to them, or delight in them, for old acquaintance' sake, or because they were instruments of our good on earth, I know not; but I know that our love to them with whom we had holy comfort on earth, may well render heaven more familiar to us now, and more suitable to our desires. O! how great a number of my godly friends are there! They are so many that I cannot make a catalogue of their names, but the memory of abundance of them doth delight me. And when we meet there we shall be far better known to each other than we were to the most intimate on earth.

Oh, let Christians now so converse together as remembering that they must meet in heaven, where all that was secret will be brought to light. If we now put on any vizard, and seem better than we are; if we hide any sin, or base corruption; if we, by fraud or falsehood deceive our friends, all this will be opened when we meet in heaven. It is a daily grief and shame to my soul, to think of the sins that I have committed against some that are now in heaven, which I either excused, extenuated, or hid, and to think how much evil they will know of me there, which on earth they knew not by me. But God, who pardoneth them, will cause his servants there to forgive each other; but the detected sin, for all that, will be an odious, shameful thing. Lying and hypocrisy are there no cloak, but an aggravation, of the shame. If we cannot confess, and take shame to ourselves, by repentance, upon earth, how shall we appear in the open light, and see the faces of those whom we have wronged. What diminu-

tion it will make of our joy, I know not, but it must needs be a dishonor to have been false to God or man ; and especially when we meet where sin is perfectly hated, to think how we either sinned together, or that we tempted and ensnared one another in any sin. How it will affect us then I do not fully know, but it is now to me a far greater grief to think of any in heaven whom I have tempted or wronged, than it was while they lived with me on earth. And I think there is somewhat of this nature common to good and bad : even the consciences of wicked men do haunt them for notable injuries to others, especially concealed ones, and especially for persecuting the servants of God, when they are dead, more than while they lived. Insomuch that (though I doubt not of real apparitions) I am ready to think, that some that say they are haunted by the sight and the voice of such as seem to them to be deceased persons, are rather haunted by their own consciences, which strongly represent those persons to their imaginations.

But on the other side, it is a great delight to me to think of the good which I received from many that are now in heaven. Of the profitable sermons which I have heard from some, and the profitable conversations which I have had with others : how oft we sweetly consulted together of the things which concern everlasting life : how many days in public and private we spent in preparation, and in some prospect of the blessedness which now they enjoy. And it is not a small mercy to me, that I can think of the multitudes now in heaven, of whose conversion and salvation God hath made my weak endeavors a prosperous means. O what a mercy is it to think on, that while I am yet compassed with temptations, and languishing in weakness, and groaning in pain, and, worst of all, burdened with a dark and sinful soul, so many are past all this with Christ, by means of any help which he sent them by my labors. It hath oft humbled me greatly to read in the lives of such men as John Janeway and Joseph Allen, how much of their proficiency they ascribed to my writings, and how far they overwent me, and left me quite behind them in holy delights and praises of God ! But how much more am I below a multitude now in heaven, who called me father here on earth !

And if here I must rejoice with them that rejoice, as well as mourn with them that mourn, why should I not much more rejoice with all the blessed society above ; and more familiarly with my old acquaintance, pupils, and dear friends? My love should be most to the best ; and therefore, more to them than to any other of my friends ; and therefore, my union with them being closer, and their felicity far greater, I should think with more joy of them than of any left behind. They are safe in the harbor, past all our dangerous storms and waves ; and though they know, or will know, more of my sins than they did on earth and hate them more, yet they that feel the comfort of the pardon of their own, will imitate God in pardoning me, and rejoice in God's forgiveness of me. Though their vile bodies lie like common dust, how much better do they now know the love of God, the mysteries of grace, the heavenly glory, the state of spirits in the city of God, than I do who was wont to preach it to them. God, that sent down Moses and Elias to show that saints in heaven and on earth have communion, will bring me and my friends now in heaven together again, into a far sweeter communion than ever we had here.

Sect. 24. It is no great wonder that Peter should be transported with this glorious sight ; and greatly delighted with this heavenly communion, and say, "Master it is good for us to be here." Would not a sight, a glimpse, of heaven, have transported any holy soul ; yea, even those that now lie in tears and fears, and are overwhelmed with doubts and troubles? When they are groping after God, and groaning on their knees, because they feel more of his frowns than of his love, if then they had such a sight as this, what a change would it make upon them? Perhaps you will say, that the doubt of their own sincerity might still deprive them of their joy. No ; this sight would banish doubts and troubles. It is a communication of love, and such as will fully convince the communicants.

Without such a miraculous glimpse of glory, God sometime giveth some of his servants such a mental illustration, and inward glimpse and taste of heaven, as greatly overcometh all the fears of pain and death ; such many old and later martyrs have had. It was a strange word of the godly Bishop of St. David's, Mr. Farrar, to his neighbors, 'If I stir in the fire, believe not my doctrine : ' and accordingly

he stirred not. If he had not had some prophetic inspiration, this could not have been justified from being a presumptuous tempting of God. And Mr. Baynam's case was a mere wonder, who, in the flames, called to the papists to see a miracle, professing to them, that in the fire he felt no more pain than if he had been laid on a bed of down or roses.

I am just now reading in Melch. Adam's *Lives of the German Philosophers*, the *Life of Olympia Fulvia Morata*, which ended with some such experience. In many ages there hath been some one rare woman, who hath excelled men in the languages, philosophy, and other human learning. Such an one was this *Olympia Fulvia Morata*, of Ferrara. She married Andr. Gundler, a physician: she removed with him into Germany; and was by the way convinced of the guard of angels, by her young brother falling out of a high window, on cragged stones, without any more hurt than if it had been on the soft ground. In Germany, she thus wrote to Anna, Estensis, a Guisian princess: 'As soon as, by the singular goodness of God, I was departed from the Italian idolatry, and came with my husband into Germany, it is incredible how God changed my soul, (or mind,) which being formally most averse (or abhorring) to the divine Scriptures, am now delighted in them alone, and place in them all my study, labor, care, and mind; and, as much as possible, condemn all the riches, honors, and pleasures, which formally I was wont to admire.' But the cross presently following, in God's usual method, her husband and she were, by soldiers, stripped naked, save the shift next the body, and narrowly escaping with life, were put so to wander from place to place, none daring to entertain them, even when she was sick of a fever; till at last they found liberal entertainment, in which she shortly fell into a mortal disease, of which she died. And in her last sickness, and after much torment of body, near death, she pleasantly smiled. Her husband asked her the cause; who said, 'I saw a certain place which was full of a most clear and beauteous light;' intimating that she should quickly be there, and saying, 'I am wholly full of joy.' And spake no more till, her eyesight failing her, she said, 'I scarce know any of you any more; but all things else about seem to be full of most beauteous flowers;' which were her last words;

having a long time professed, that nothing seemed more desirable to her, than to be dissolved, and so be with Christ, in all her sickness magnifying his mercies to her.

Many have thus joyfully laid down the flesh to go to Christ ; what wonder, then, if Peter was loth to lose the pleasure of what he saw.

Two things are necessary to great and solid joy ; first, that the object be truly and greatly amiable, and delectable ; and, secondly, that the apprehensions of it be clear and strong. As to the first we have so great and glorious things to delight us as would feast our souls with constant joy, were not the second, alas ! much wanting. What man could choose but be even in Peter's rapture continually, if he had but ascertained heavenly glory, apprehended by him in as satisfactory a manner as these sensible things are ? If I lay in prison, yea, or in torment of cholic, stone, or any such disease, and had but withal such apprehensions, or sight, of assured glory, surely the pain would not be able to suppress my joy. What a mixture, what a discord would there be in my expressions ; torment would constrain my flesh to groan, and the sight of heaven would make me triumph. I cannot but think how this great discord would show the difference between the spirit and the flesh. What a strange thing it would be to hear the same man, at the same time, crying out in pain with groans, and magnifying the love of God with transporting joy ! But we are not yet fit for such joyful apprehensions ; our weak eyes must not see the sun, but through the allaying medium of a humid air, at a vast distance, and by the chrystalline humor, and organical parts of the eye. Fain we would get nearer, and have sight, or clearer apprehensions, of the spiritual society, and glorious world. We study, we pray, we look up, we groan under our distance, darkness, and unsatisfying conceptions ; but yet it must not be ; we must be ripened before the shell will break, or the dark womb will deliver us up to the glorious light. But Christ vouchsafed that to his three apostles which we are unworthy of, and yet unfit for. O happy sight ! O happy men ! It is incongruous to say, ' What would I not give for such a sight ? ' lest it should savor of Simon Magus' folly ; and I have nothing to give ; but it is not incongruous to say, ' What would I not do ; and what would I not suffer for such a sight ? ' Yea, Christ puts

such kind of questions to us : O that I had better answered them in the hour of duty, and in the hour of temptation ! When he asked, " Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism, that I am baptised with ? " I have been ready, with James and John, to say, I can ; but when the trial comes, (as they after in his suffering forsook him and fled,) how insufficient is my own strength to perform my promise ? When he did impose on me the denying of myself, forsaking all, taking up the cross and following him, I yielded and covenanted by vow to do it ; but it was by the help of the Holy Spirit, which he promised to give me. I stand, Lord, to my covenant ; help me to perform it ; and give me, though not his present sight, yet some of Peter's mental apprehensions, and a glimpse, a taste, of that which transported him with delight. Let who will (or who thou wilt) take the riches and grandeur of the world. O give me some delightful taste of that which I am made for, redeemed for, and which thy Spirit hath long taught me to seek and hope for, as my all !

Sect. 25. Peter was not weary with the sight of this heavenly apparition. Why should I be weary of the believing contemplation of greater things ? Though sight affect us more sensibly than mere believing and thinking, yet these have their happy office, which may be effectual. And Christ, who thus appeared in glory to Peter, hath said, " Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." And Peter himself saith of them that see not Christ, that " They rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," in believing. O how unexcusable am I for every weary prayer or meditation of such a glory ; and for yielding to Satan and a backward heart, which have oft made me shorten these sweet employments, when I had time, and leave, and need, to lengthen them. What ! weary of communion with Christ ! weary of speaking to my heavenly Father, for endless blessedness, upon such joyful terms of hope as he hath given me ! weary of the thoughts of the city of God, the heavenly society and work ! weary of exciting divine love, and exercising it in divine praise, which are the works of angels, and all the heavenly host ! Oh, how justly might God be, as it were, weary of me, and of my

weary services ; yea, of the best that I can offer him, which hath in it so much to give him cause !

Sect. 26. Peter did not fly from this glorious prospect ; but would fain have had more of it, and have dwelt upon the holy mount. And when God will call me to a more glorious vision and fruition in heaven, shall I draw back, and be unwilling to go ? Was that mount a better place than heaven ? Is not Christ now to be there seen in greater glory ? Is the Jerusalem above, the glorious company of saints and angels, no better and more desirable a sight, than Moses and Elias were on the mount ? Alas ! when we have read, and heard, and thought, and talked so much of heaven, and done and suffered so much for it, that yet we should draw back with fear and unwillingness to go to it ! O what lamentable weakness of faith, and power of flesh, doth this discover ! When I read Peter's words "It is good to be here," I am grieved that I, who dwell in a world so near like hell, among the implacable haters of holiness and holy peace, and in a painful, tired body, and who have thought, said, and written so much of heaven, do yet say, with no stronger desire and joy, "It is good to be there." When I see all natural appetites desire earnestly their proper food, and even the brutes desire their beloved company, shall my holy appetite be so dull and indifferent ? Lord, quicken it by the fuller communications of thy Spirit, and save me from this hated, dangerous disease.

Sect. 27. But Peter spake he knew not what, when he talked of building tabernacles on earth, for the fruition of that which is proper to heaven. Alas ! this is our common malady and folly : we would have Christ in the splendor of his glory ; but we would have him here : we would see Moses and Elias, if they will come down to us : we would have that in the flesh, which flesh and blood cannot possess. O if we knew in what land, what city, what country, what private house, we might live in the least glimpse of the heavenly glory, how joyfully should we run to such an habitation ! Merchants make towards the most gainful place for trade : poor men inquire after the most fertile and delectable countries for plantation : gentlemen delight themselves with a sweet and pleasantly-seated mansion ; but if saints on earth could find a place where they could see what

Stephen, or Paul, or the apostles saw, and have a little of heaven without dying or putting off this body, what a desirable dwelling would that seem to them? And yet, alas, how cold are our desires of the time and place where we shall have much more! We have Christ on earth, in the manner and measure that we are capable: we have here some communion with heaven, as verily (though not so sensibly) as our eye hath with the sun. God will not deny believers their title, their earnest, and some first-fruits; but when we would have our all, or our best on earth, or that on earth which is proper to heaven, we know not what we desire or say.

Are we, vile, dirty sinners in flesh, now fit for heavenly sights or joys? Or is this world a place for building tabernacles, where we may see the Lord, and take up our rest? What! in a world of temptations, of wickedness, of sufferings, where we are daily wrestling for our lives, and fighting, not merely against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, even spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high places (above the greatest men that are their servants). (Eph. vi. 12.) But that which is of the earth is earthly. Our earthly part would have an earthly felicity; but when we know that it is corruptible, and a dying thing, and that we have here no continuing city, both faith and reason bid us seek for one to come. The unfaithful steward had so much wit as to make sure of another habitation, when he knew that he must be no longer steward.

God hath so constantly confuted and befooled me, by his marvellous providence, whenever I have said, 'Soul take thy ease,' and have thought of building tabernacles on earth, as hath convinced me, that such folly is not the least part of the danger of a soul, from which his mercy did so watchfully save me. If a little health and ease, or a pleasant habitation, or beloved company and friends, have but flattered me into earthly delight and hopes, and made me say, "It is good to be here;" I never was long without some pains, and dangerous sickness, or some loss or cross in friends, or some removal by personal or public changes, to tell me, that I knew not what I said, and that rest and happiness are not here. As the laborious ants and bees are long gathering a heap of treasure, and furnishing a hive

with winter provisions, and a contemptuous foot soon spurneth about the one, and the chief owner of the hive destroyeth the other; so (while I neglected wealth and honor) when I have but treasured up the choicest books, and taken pleasure in my works and friends, God saw that such pleasures needed an allay, and hath taken away books and friends together, or driven me oft from them and my habitation, to tell me, sensibly, that I have higher to look, and further to go; and that Moses and Elias appeared not to turn earth into heaven, and make me think that now I am well, but to invite my soul to their celestial habitation. When Christ hath comforted me by hearing prayers, by great deliverances, by wonderful success of my defective labors, by comfortable friends, by public mercies, it was not, by making my condition pleasant, to keep down my desires from heaven, but to draw them thither by such foretastes. Contentment with our condition, as without more of the world, is a great duty; but to be content with the world, or any thing on earth, without more holiness and communion with God, and without a part in the heavenly perfection, is a heinous and pernicious sin.

But, alas! it is a far worse mistake than Peter's, which deceiveth the greatest part of men. They say, indeed, as he, "It is good to be here," (till melancholy or misery make them intolerable to themselves,) but it is not because they have seen a glimpse of heaven on earth, or tasted the sweetness of the holy society and work, but because their bodies are in health, their purses full, their appetites pleased, and their inferiors do their wills and honor them. This is all the heaven that they love; and, to leave all this is the death which they abhor and fear. And they will not hear God, and the experience of all mankind befooling them, till near the night that their souls shall be required, and then, whose will all their treasure be?

Sect. 28. But yet it was a greater part of Peter's dotage, to think of tabernacles for Christ, Moses, and Elias, and of detaining of heavenly inhabitants upon earth. If you would offer the lowest saint in heaven an earthly kingdom in exchange for his condition, with what disdain would he despise the offer? Christ's kingdom was not of this world, nor would Moses and Elias change their lot with Alexander or Cæsar. Poor trifles allure us, and seem somewhat to us (as

toys to children) while we are dreaming in the flesh ; but if once we be delivered, and see what the celestial glory is, what a change will it make upon our judgments? We fear now in the dark to go unto that world of light, and are loth to put off the rags of flesh, and to depart from a known, though a dirty, falling habitation : but if we get to heaven, we shall be loth to return to earth again, and be so coarsely cloathed : when once we are there, a world would not hire us to come back into this corruptible body, till God will make it spiritual and incorruptible. Our friends, whose deaths we passionately lamented, would be loth now to change their company for such as we are, or their abode for such a wicked world as this, or their work for the best of ours on earth : no wonder that departed souls appear not to their friends on earth : most apparitions are of devils, or miserable souls, to whom it is no loss or condescension. Were I once in heaven, could I possibly be willing to be turned again into a Bedlam world, and laid under the feet of blinded pride, and raging madness, and live among Sodomites (called Christians) whose God is their belly, and who glory in their filthiness and shame, and mind nothing, with love, but earthly things ; and are bitter enemies, not only to the cross, but to the government of Christ ? Would I be again among dogs and swine ; yea, devils in the flesh, who hate and persecute the regenerate seed, and all that will not receive the mark, and be as mad and bad as they ? Would I again be groaning here in pain, or tired with a weary body, and more with a feeble, sinful soul, weak in faith, cold in love, of doubtful hope, and imperfect duty ? Would I be here again in the prospect of a grave, with fear of dying ; as strange as now to the heavenly felicity ? Lazarus will not come from Abraham's bosom, for the rich man's wealth and belly-pleasure, no, not to warn his sensual brethren. Had Peter seen heaven as he saw the glory on the mount, he would never have made so blind a motion for Christ, Moses, and Elias, to continue there, who have so much better a habitation.

Sect. 29. But this glorious apparition was but short : as the glory of God's back parts to Moses, which did but pass by. Presently a cloud cometh, and separateth the company, and ends the pleasant sight. When Christians receive some extraordinary sense of the

love of God, some sweet foretastes of promised happiness, they must not look that this should be ordinary, or always so. When some fervent prayer is extraordinarily answered, and a sacrament sweetened with drops of heavenly sweetness, or a holy discourse or meditation hath raised us higher than ever before, we must not expect that this should be our constant diet, and God should thus feast us all the year. The times of fasting also have their turn. Moses did not dwell on Mount Horeb, nor Mount Nebo or Pisgah, from whence he saw the Land of Promise. God's children do not always laugh and sing; while they have their sinning times, they will have their suffering and crying times. How suddenly doth the lark come down to the earth, who before was soaring out of sight, and singing pleasantly in the higher air, as if it had been aspiring towards the sun. A luscious diet is not best for such as we, that have so many corruptions to be cured by cleansing means: cordials must not be all our physic; unwarrantable expectations of greater or more continued joys than we are meet for, is injurious both to God and to ourselves. Desires of more we may and must have: but those desires must look up to heaven, where, indeed, they may be satisfied.

Sect. 30. The joy of these spectators was turned into fear (saith the text) when they entered into the cloud. No wonder: the change was sudden and great; from a sight of the kingdom of God in power unto a dark cloud. Just now they seemed almost in heaven, and presently they knew not where they were: from glorious light to a kind of prison of obscurity.

Such changes here we are liable to. The same soul that lately tasted of transporting joy, may lie in terror, hardly resisting temptations to despair. The same person that was confident of the love of God may be quickly, not only doubting of it, but sinfully denying it: the same that had assuring evidence of sincerity, may shortly conclude that all was but hypocrisy. The same that was triumphing in the sense of love, may cry out, O miserable man that I am! And as the same that magnified the grace of Christ, may say, the day of grace is past; especially if either the tempter get the advantage of a melancholy body, or of casting the soul into renewed guilt of some wounding sin, or into impatient discontents, with the things that befall it in the world.

There is a stability in the essentials of holiness: it is life eternal that is here begun: but, alas! the degrees of grace, the exercise of it, the evenness and integrity of our obedience, and accordingly our comforts, are lamentably liable to change: even as all worldly things are mutable to the ungodly, though their hardened hearts are too little changeable. Expecting nothing but joy from God, or expecting more than we are meet for, maketh our dejections the greater, and more grievous. None are cast lower with terror, trouble, and almost despair, than some that have been most transported with joy: when some other Christians of an even conversation have an evenness and constancy of holy peace, though no such joys.

Sect. 31. The cloud separated the company; Moses and Elias are seen no more; no, nor the glory of Christ: but yet Christ is not separated from them: his ordinary presence still abideth with them. Christ doth not leave the soul when extraordinary joys do leave it: it loseth not his saving grace, nor the presence of his Spirit, as oft as it loseth heavenly delight. Desire showeth love to him, and to his holiness; and he never forsaketh those that love him. As long as the soul breatheth after Christ, and after more communion with God, and, conscious of its imperfection, would fain be perfect, and resolveth to continue waiting for increase of faith and holiness in the use of the means which Christ hath appointed, it is not forsaken. Christ, by his Spirit, dwelleth and worketh in that soul. It may enter into a cloud, and Christ may be unseen, and seem quite lost, but the cloud will vanish, and he will appear; and he will first find us, that we may seek and find him. If he appear to us but as in his humiliation, and as crucified, and thereby humble us, and crucify us to the world and the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof, and cause us but to seek first his kingdom and righteousness, he will raise us higher, and show us his glory, when grace, and conquest, and perseverance have prepared us. We are in a cloudy world and body; and our sins are yet a thicker cloud between God's glorious face and us: but as God is God, and heaven is heaven, so Christ is Christ, and grace is grace, when we see it not, but fear that we are undone, and entering into outer darkness: and at sun-rising, all our darkness, and all our doubts and fears will vanish.

Sect. 32. "There came a voice out of the cloud, this is my beloved Son; hear him." (Luke ix. 35.) Had I heard such a testimony from heaven, would it not have set my faith above all doubts and unbelief? For the voice that thus owned Christ and his word, might embolden me fully to trust all his promises, as it bindeth me to obey his precepts.

God's love is effective and communicative; and as his life and light cause life and light, so his love causeth love; and Christ, that is called his beloved Son, is likest him in love; none loveth us so much as God our Father, and his beloved Son, who is also as God, essential love. And shall I think with cold or little love of such a God, and such a Savior? It is as unreasonable to fly from God or Christ, as fearing that he wanteth love to a capable soul, as to fly from the sun as wanting heat or light. Oh, what an unruly, froward thing is the corrupted soul of man! When we think of God's judgment, and how we are in his hands, as to all our hopes, for soul and body, we fear, and are uncomfortable, lest he have not so much love and mercy as should cause us confidently to trust him: we could trust some friends with life and soul were we in their power; but infinite love itself, and a loving Savior, we can hardly trust, so far as to quiet us in pain or death. And yet when Christ, to cure this distrust, hath manifested his love by the greatest miracles that ever God showed to mortal men, even by Christ's incarnation, his life, his works, his death, his resurrection, intercession, and the advancement of human nature in him above angels, the greatness of this incomprehensible love occasioneth the difficulty of our believing it; as if it were too great and wonderful to be credible: thus dark and guilty sinners hardly believe our Father's love, whether it be expressed by ordinary or by the most wonderful effects.

Sect. 33. As Christ is called the Son of God, so also are all his members: we have so far the same title, that we might partake of the same comforts: he is God's only Son, by eternal generation, and the hypostatical union upon his miraculous conception: but through him we are sons by regeneration and adoption. And shall not the love of such a Father be trusted, and the presence and pleasing of such a Father be desired? If Manoah's wife could say, "If he

would have killed us, he would not have accepted a sacrifice of us ;” I may say, if he would have damned me, or forsaken my departing soul, he would not have adopted me, nor made and called me his Son. Christ was made his incarnate son, that we might be made his adopted sons : and we are made his adopted sons, for the sake, and by the grace, of Christ, his natural Son.

Sect. 34. The command, “hear him,” is relative, as to Moses and Elias : 1. Hear him whom the law and the prophets typified and foretold, and were his servants, and preparatory instructors, to lead us to him. 2. Hear him before Moses and the prophets, where his coming and covenant abrogateth the law of Moses, and as a greater light, he obscureth the less : he hath revealed more than they revealed ; and, the same more clearly : life and immortality is more fully brought to light by him : his gospel is as the heart of the Holy Bible : we use the Old Testament books, especially as the witnesses of Christ.

Sect. 35. And whom shall we hear so willingly, so obediently, as Christ ? Abraham sent not Dives’s brethren to the king, or to the high-priest, to know what religion he should choose, or what he should do to escape hell torments ; but it was Moses and the prophets that they must hear. But God, from heaven, hath sent us yet a better teacher, and commanded us to hear him : Moses was faithful in God’s house as a servant, but Christ as a Son : his authority is above kings and high priests ; and they have no power now but from him ; and therefore none against him or his laws : all commands are null to conscience, which contradict him : the examples in Daniel iii. and vi., and of the Apostles, tell us, whether God or man should be first obeyed : therefore it is that the Bible is more necessary to be searched and learned than the statute-book, or canons : were man to be heard before Christ, or against him, or as necessarily as he, why have we not law-preachers every Lord’s-day to expound the statutes and canons to all the people ? And why are they not catechised out of the book of canons, or law, as well as out of the Bible ?

And sure if we must hear Christ and his gospel before priests or princes, or before our dearest friends, much more before our fleshly lusts and appetites, and before a profane and foolish scorner, and before

the temptations of the devil. O had we heard Christ warning us, when we hearkened to the tempter, and to the flesh, how safely had we lived, and how comfortably might we have died.

Sect. 36. But this word, "hear him," is as comfortable as obligatory. Hear him, sinner, when he calls to thee to repent and turn to God : hear him when he calleth thee to himself, to take him for thy Lord and Savior, to believe and trust him for pardon and salvation : hear him, when he calleth, "Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden : ho, every one that thirsteth come : whoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely." Hear him when he commandeth, and hear him when he promiseth ; and hear him before the worldly wise, when he teacheth us the way to God : hear him, for he knows what he saith : hear him, for he is true, and faithful, and infallible : hear him, for he is the son of God, the greatest messenger that ever God sent : hear him, for he purposely came down in flesh, that he might familiarly teach us : hear him, for none else in the world hath made known the things of God like him, and none can do it : hear him, for he meaneth us no hurt ; he is our dearest friend, and love itself, and saith nothing but for our salvation, and promiseth nothing but what he will perform. Yea, hear him, for every soul that will not hear him shall be cut off.

Hear him, therefore, if he contradict thy fleshly appetite ; hear him, if great or small, if any or all shall be against it : hear him, if he set thee on the hardest work, or call thee to the greatest suffering : hear him, if he bid thee take up the cross, and forsake all and follow him, in hope of a reward in heaven : hear him, if he call thee to lay down thy life ; for none can be a loser by him.

Hear him now in the day of grace, and he will hear thee in the day of thy extremity, in the day of danger, sickness, death, and judgment, when the world forsaketh thee, and no one's hearing else can help thee.

Sect. 37. But, 'I was not one that saw this vision : had I seen it myself it would have satisfied me, and confuted all my doubts.' Answ. But it is the will of God that the ministry and testimony of men shall be a means of our believing : it is faith, and not sight, that must be the ordinary way of our salvation ; else Christ must have

showed himself, and his miracles, resurrection, and ascension, to every one in the world that must believe in him : and then he must have been visible at once in every kingdom, parish, and place on earth, and continued so to the end of the world ; and must have died, risen, and ascended many millions of times, and in every place. They that will put such laws on their law-giver before they will believe in him, must be saved without him, and against him if they can. This is more unreasonable than to tell God that you will not believe that there is a heaven or hell unless you see them. But God will have us live, and be saved by believing, and not by sight. And he will use man for the instruction and salvation of man, and not send angels with every message.

Sect 38. But why did Christ show this vision but to three of his disciples ? Answ. He is not bound to tell us why : but we may know that a sight of heavenly glory is not to be ordinarily expected on earth. Why did God show the back parts of his glory to none but Moses, no, not to his brother Aaron ? Why did he speak to him only in the bush, and on the mount ? Why did he translate none to heaven without dying but Enoch and Elias ? Why did he save but Noah, and seven with him, in the ark ? These are not things ordinary, nor to be common to many.

Sect. 39. But by this it appeareth, that even among his twelve apostles Christ made a difference, and preferred some before the rest ; though he set no one over the rest in any governing authority, yet some of them were qualified above the rest, and esteemed, and used by him accordingly. Peter is called the first, and, it seems, was qualified above the rest, by his more frequent speaking and familiarity with Christ, and his speeches and miracles after the resurrection ; though yet the faction that said, "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Paul," was rebuked as carnal. So far was Christ from directing the churches to end all difference by obeying Peter as their supreme ruler. James and John are called the sons of thunder : they had some more eminent qualification than the rest ; so that James was the first martyred apostle, and John the disciple whom Jesus specially loved. Ministers of the same office and order may much differ in gifts and grace, in labor and success, and in God's accep-

tance and reward, and in the church's just esteem and love. All pastors were not such as Cyprian, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, or Augustin. And the rest must not envy at the preference of Peter, James, and John. Andrew seems to be Peter's elder brother, and knew Christ before him; as Aaron was elder brother to Moses, and yet must give God leave to choose to give pre-eminence to whom he will.

Sect. 40. But why did not these three apostles tell any of this vision till after Christ's resurrection? Answ. Christ did forbid it them. And it is according to the method of his revelation. He would make himself known to the world by degrees; and more by his works than by mere words; and these works were to be finished, and all set together, to be his convincing witness to the world. And the chief of these were his resurrection, ascension, and sending down the Holy Ghost: the apostles could not say till then, 'Jesus is risen, ascended, and hath given us the seal of the Spirit; therefore he is the Son of God.' Christ first preached repentance, like John Baptist; and next he told them that the kingdom of God (by the Messiah) has come, and was among them; and then he taught them to believe his word to be sent from God, and to be true; and he taught them the doctrines of holiness, love, and righteousness towards men: and he wrought those miracles which might convince them that what he said, or should say, deserved their belief; but yet before his resurrection, his apostles themselves understood not many of the articles of our creed; they knew not that Christ was to die for sin, and so to redeem the world by his sacrifice, nor that he was to rise, ascend, and reign, and intercede in glory; and yet they were then in a state of grace and life, such as believers were in before Christ's incarnation. And sure no more is required of the nations that cannot hear the gospel.

But the resurrection was the beginning of the proper gospel state, and kingdom, to which all before was but preparatory; and then, by the Spirit, Christianity was formed to its settled consistence, and is a known, unalterable thing.

And it is a great confirmation to our faith, that Christ's kingdom was not settled by any advantage of his personal presence, preach-

ing, and persuasion, so much as by the Holy Ghost in his apostles and disciples, when he has gone from them into heaven.

Sect. 41. But how are we sure that these three men tell us nothing but the truth? Answ. This is oft answered elsewhere. The Spirit which they spake and worked by, was Christ's witness and theirs. They healed the sick, raised the dead, spake various languages which they never learned; and preached and recorded that holy doctrine committed to them by Christ, which itself contained the evidence of its divinity, and of their truth; and Christ then and to this day hath owned it, by the sanctifying efficacy of the same Spirit, upon millions of souls.

How holy a doctrine hath Peter himself delivered, as confirmed by his apparition! "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount." (2 Peter i. 16—18.) The words "in whom I am well pleased," are only here and in Matthew; Mark and Luke omitting them, tell us, that the evangelists undertook not to recite all that was said and done, but each one so much as seemed necessary for him to say.

Sect. 42. And now what remaineth, O my soul, but that thou take in the due impression of this apparition of the glory of Jesus and his saints; and that thou joyfully obey this heavenly voice, and hear the beloved Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased?

I. As we that are born in another age and land must know what Christ said, by the transmission and certain testimony of them that heard him, infallible tradition, by act, word, and record, being our way of notice, as immediate sensation was theirs, so even the glorious apparition itself may, by the mediation of their infallible record, be partly transmitted to our imagination. An incorporate soul is so used to a mixed way of knowing by imagined ideas received by sense, that it would fain have such a sort of knowledge of separated souls, and other spirits, and of their glorious state and place, and work,

and is hardly fully satisfied without it. Seeing Christ hath partly condescended to this our culpable weakness, lose not the help of his condescension. Let this clear description of the heavenly sight, make it to thee partly as if thou hadst been one of the three spectators; till thou canst say, 'Methinks I almost see the face of Christ shine as the sun, and his raiment whiter than the snow; and Moses and Elias (no doubt, in some degree of glory) standing with him;' methinks I almost hear them discoursing of Christ's death, and man's redemption: and by this sight I partly conceive of the unseen heavenly company and state; methinks I see the cloud receive them, when Peter had been transported with the sight; and I almost feel his pleasant raptures, and am ready to say, as if I had been with him, "It is good for us to be here;" methinks I almost hear the heavenly voice, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." And shall I yet doubt of the celestial society and glory? Had I once seen that, what a sense would it have left upon my heart, of the difference between earth and heaven, man and God, flesh and spirit, sin and duty! How thankfully should I have thought of the work of redemption and sanctification.

And why may I not accordingly put myself as into the case of them who saw all Christ's miracles, and saw him risen, and ascend towards heaven? or, at least, of all those ordinary Christians who saw all the wonders done by the reporters of these things? I can easily receive a pleasing idea of some foreign, happy country, which a traveller describeth to me, though I never saw it; and my reason can partly gather what great things are, if I see but lesser of the same kind, or somewhat like them. A candle sheweth somewhat by which we may conceive of the greatest flame. Even grace and gracious actions do somewhat notify to us the state of glory; but the sight on the mount did more sensibly notify it.

Think not, then, that heavenly contemplation is an impossible thing, or a mere dream, as if it had no conceivable subject-matter to work upon: the visible things of earth are the shadows, the cobwebs, the bubbles, the shows, mummeries, and masks: and it is loving them, and rejoicing and trusting in them, that is the dream and dotage. Our heavenly thoughts, and hopes, and business, are more in com-

parison of these than the sun is to a glow-worm, or the world to a mole-hill, or governing an empire to the motions of a fly. And can I make somewhat, yea, too much, of these almost nothings; and yet shall I make almost nothing of the active, glorious, unseen world; and doubt and grope in my meditations of it, as if I had no substance to apprehend? If invisibility to mortals were a cause of doubting, or of unaffecting, unsatisfying thoughts, God himself, who is all to men and angels, would be as no God to us, and heaven as no heaven, and Christ as no Christ, and our souls, which are ourselves, would seem as nothing to themselves; and all men would be as no men to us, and we should converse only with carcasses and clothes.

Lord shine into this soul with such an heavenly, potent, quickening light, as may give me more lively and powerful conceptions of that which is all my hope and life! Leave me not to the exercise of art alone, in barren notions; but make it as natural to me to love thee, and breathe after thee: thou teachest the young ones both of men and brutes to seek to the dam for food and shelter: and though grace be not a brutish principle, but works by reason, it hath its nature and inclining force; and tendeth towards its original, as its end. Let not my soul be destitute of that holy sense and appetite, which the divine and heavenly nature doth contain. Let me not lay more stress and trust upon my own sight and sense, than on the sight and fidelity of my God, and my Redeemer. I am not so foolish as to live, as if this earth were no bigger than the little of it which I see: let me not be so much more foolish as to think of the vast and glorious regions, and the blessed inhabitants thereof, and the receptacles of justified souls, as if they wanted either substantiality or certainty, to exercise a heavenly conversation here, and to feast believing souls with joy, and draw forth well-grounded and earnest desire to "depart and be with Christ."

Sect. 43. II. Hear then, and hear with trust and joy, the tidings and promises of him whom the voice from heaven commanded man to hear. He is the glorified Lord of heaven and earth: all is in his power. He hath told us nothing but what he knew, and promised nothing but what he is able and willing to give. Two sorts of things he hath required us to trust him for: things notified by express,

particular promises, and things only generally promised and known to us.

We may know particularly that he will receive our departing souls, and justify them in judgment, and raise the dead, and all the rest particularly promised. And we know, in general, that we have a heavenly city and inheritance, and shall see God, and be with Christ in everlasting happiness, loving and praising God with joy in the perfected, glorious church of Christ. All this, therefore, we must explicitly believe. But it is little that we know distinctly of the consistence and operations of spirits and separated souls, as to a formal or modal conception; a great deal about the place, state, and mode, their acting, and fruition, is dark to us; but none of it is dark to Christ: here, therefore, an implicit trust should not only bind and stop our selfish and over-bold inquiries, but also quiet and comfort the soul, as well as if ourselves knew all.

O my soul, abhor and mortify thy selfish trust, and unbelieving thirst to have that knowledge of good and evil thyself, which is the prerogative of thy Lord and Savior. This was the sin that first defiled human nature, and brought calamity on the world. God hath set thee enough to learn; know that, and thou knowest enough. If more were possible, it would be a perplexity and a snare, and he that increaseth such knowledge would increase sorrow: but when it is both unprofitable and impossible, what a sin and folly it is to waste our time, and tire and deceive our minds, in long and troublesome searches after it; and then disquietly to murmur at God, and the holy Scripture, and die with sad, distrustful fears, because we attain it not: when all this while we should have understood, that this part of knowledge belongs to Christ, and the heavenly society, and not to sinful mortals here; and that we have without it as much as may cause us to live and die in holiness, safety, peace, and joy, if we can but trust him who knoweth for us. Christ perfectly knoweth what spirits are, and how they act, and whether they have any corporeal organ, or vehicle, or none; and what is the difference between Enoch and Elias, and those that left their bodies here, and what a resurrection will add to souls, and how it will be wrought, and when; and what is meant by the thousand years' previous reign; and who they

be that shall dwell in the new earth, and how it will be renewed. All the dark passages of Scripture and providence he can perfectly resolve : he knoweth why God leaveth the far greatest part of the world in Satan's slavery, darkness, and wickedness, and chooseth so few to real holiness : and why he maketh not men such as he commandeth them to be : and why he leaveth serious Christians to so much weakness, error, scandal, and division. These, and all other difficulties, are fully known to Christ. And it is not the child, but the father, that must know what food and clothing he should have, and the physician that must know what are the ingredients of his medicines, and why.

Lord, open my eyes, then, to see what thou hast revealed ; and help me willingly to shut them to the rest ; and to believe and trust in thee for both : not to stagger at thy sealed promises, nor selfishly to desire particular knowledge, which belongs not to me, as if I could trust myself, and my own knowledge, and not thine. Lord teach me to follow thee, even in the dark, as quietly and confidently as in the light (having the general light of thy promise of felicity). I knew not the mystery of thy conception, incarnation, or the way of the workings of thy Spirit on souls. No wonder if much of the resurrection and unseen world be above my reach ; much more that thy infinite majesty is incomprehensible to me : how little do the brutes that see me know of my thoughts or me ! I have no adequate knowledge of any one thing in the world, but somewhat of it is unknown. O blessed be that love and grace that has given me a glorified Head in heaven, to know all for me which I know not : hear and trust him, living and departing, O my soul ! who hath told thee that we shall be with him where he is, and shall behold his glory ; and that a crown of salvation is laid up for us, and we shall reign with him, when we have conquered and suffered with him, and hath bid us live in joyful hope of our exceeding, eternal, heavenly reward, and at our death to commend our spirits into his hand : receive us, Lord, according to thy promises. Amen.

SHORT MEDITATIONS.

ON

ROMANS v. 1—5.

OF THE

SHEDDING ABROAD GOD'S LOVE ON THE HEART BY THE
HOLY GHOST.

EXPERIENCE of the want of this effusion of God's love, and some small taste of its sweetness, make me think the thoughts of this very suitable to one expecting death.

The words contain a golden chain of highest blessings on all true Christians.

I. They are supposed to have faith, that is, both a general trust in God's revelations and grace, and a special trust in Jesus Christ, as given by the Father's love to be the Redeemer, to justify, sanctify, and glorify his people. I have oft proved this justifying faith to be no less than our unfeigned taking Christ for our Savior, and becoming true Christians, according to the tenor of the baptismal covenant. As to the acts, it is formally trust—one in three; the understanding's assenting trust, the wills consenting trust, and the executive power's practical, venturing, obeying trust.

II. All true believers are justified; even all that consent to the baptismal covenant, and choose God to be their God, and Christ to be their Savior, and the Holy Ghost to be their Sanctifier, and give up themselves to him by true resolution, as their only ruler, hope, and happiness; though this be done with so great weakness, as endeth not all doubts, nor quieteth the mind.

To be justified is not to be accounted such as have no sin, but, 1. To be made such by pardon through Christ's merits, and by true faith, as God will take by special love and favor unto life. 2. To be accounted such by God. 3. To be virtually sentenced such by the

law of grace and faith, and to be just in law sense. 4. At last to be judged such by public sentence. 5. And to be used as such.

Not justified by the law of innocency, or of Moses, but by Christ's law of grace.

Not justified perfectly till the time of perfection. Much punishment on soul and body is yet to be taken off, and more sins daily to be pardoned, and we, before the world, to be sentenced as just to life everlasting.

III. The justified have peace with God. They are reconciled, and in a state of love and friendship. It signifieth mutual peace, but with great inequality. God's love and favor to us is the stable, constant part. Our consent also, and acceptance of his terms of peace, is constant in its truth : but our sense of God's love, which is the peace possessed by the soul, is weak and inconstant, and too oft quite lost or obscured by ignorance, mistake and fear. But it must be known that this is a diseased state, unnatural to the believer as such ; as it is unnatural for a woman married to a faithful husband, to lie in terror, thinking that he will kill her, or doth not love her ; or for a child to think the same of a loving father. Faith, of its own nature, tendeth to the soul's peace and joy, in the sense of God's love. And how is Christ offered to us, but as a Savior, to bring us by grace to glory ? And he that accepteth him as such, whereby he is justified, doth sure believe that he is offered as such ; for none can accept what he thinks not to be offered. And this implieth some hope, at least, that Christ will be such to us ; and did faith work strongly and kindly, its effect would be a constant, joyful state of soul, as pleasant health and mirth is to our natures. All our distrustful fears and griefs, and disquietness of soul, are for want of more faith, as sickness and pain is for the want of vital causes of health.

IV. This peace with God is only "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Though it be a vain dream to think by justifying faith is meant Christ only, and not faith : yet it is no other faith but the foresaid believing trust on Christ. Therefore, as faith is our part, so it supposeth Christ, and all the works of his office, and righteousness, on his part, as its object. Christ is the purchasing cause ; but our trust and acceptance is that which is pleasing to God, and chosen by him to be our part, without innocency, or keeping the Jewish law.

Since man once sinned, God's justice, and man's conscience, tell us that we are unfit for God's acceptance or communion immediately, but must have a suitable Mediator. Oh! blessed be God for this suitable Mediator. Without him I dare not pray, I cannot hope, I dare not die; God would else frown me away to misery. All the hope of pardon and salvation that I have; all the access to God, and the mercies and deliverances that I have received, have been by this Author and Finisher of our faith. Into his conducting hands I give my soul; and into his preserving hands both soul and body; and into his receiving hands I commend my departing soul.

V. Ver. 2. 'By whom we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand;' that is, into this state of blessed Christianity, peace with God, and the following blessings. As it is by marriage that a woman hath right to her husband's estate and honors, and by inheritance that a child comes to his father's maintenance and land. This is no diminution to God's love. To say it is all by Christ, is not to take it as ever the less from God the Father. It is more to give us Christ, and life in him, than to have given us life without a Christ; (John iii. 16; 1 John v. 10—12,) as God is never the less, the giver of light to the earth, for giving it them by the sun. Second causes diminish not the honor of the first.

VI. "And rejoice in hope of the glory of God." 1. The beatifical object—"The glory of God." 2. The beatifical act—"rejoice." 3. The mediate, causing act—"hope." All presupposing faith and justification.

The "glory of God" is that glorious appearance of God to man and angels, which maketh happy, (1.) the mind by beholding it, (2.) the will by loving it, and receiving the communications of love, (3.) the executive powers by joyful praise, &c.

Though some foretastes are here, it is yet said to be hoped for; and we hope for that which is not seen. When faith is said to be that which we are justified or saved by, it includeth hope, though, more precisely taken, they are distinct. "We are saved by hope." The same word is oft translated 'trust' and 'hope;' and faith is trust. To trust Christ for salvation, includeth hoping that he will save us. But hope is denominated from the good hoped for, and faith from the cause by which we hope to obtain it.

Hope doth not necessarily imply either certainty or uncertainty. It may stand with both in various degrees.

Rejoicing is made by God the very naturally desired state of the soul. It is when natural, the pleasant efflorescence of the spirits, or their state of health.

It is pleasure that is the spring or poise of all motion sensitive in the world. *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*. Appetite, or will is the active principle; and congruous good or delectable, is the object. The world is undone by the seduction of false, deceitful pleasure; and though we that made not ourselves are not so made for ourselves, as that our pleasure or felicity in God should be so high in our desire as God himself, who is the ultimate object of our love: yet, seeing such an object he is, and the love of him (and received from him) is our felicity, these are never to be separated.

What have I to rejoice in, if this hoped-for glory be not my joy? All things else are dying to me: and God himself is not my felicity, as he afflicts me, nor as he giveth me the transitory gifts of nature, but as he is to be seen in glory. If this be not my joy, it is all but vanity. What then should all my thoughts and labor aim at more, as to myself, than to hope for and foretaste this glory. No sin lieth heavier on me than that my hopes of glory raise me to no higher joy; and that the great weakness of my faith appeareth by such dull thoughts of glory, or by withdrawing fears. Sure there is enough in the glory of God, soundly believed and hoped for, to make a man rejoice in pain and weakness, and to make him long to be with Christ. I live not according to the nature of Christianity, if I live not as in peace with God, and in the joyful hopes of promised glory.

VII. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulation." Glory is so transcendent, and tribulation so small and short, that an expectant of glory may well rejoice in bodily sufferings. It is tribulation for Christ and righteousness' sake that we are said to glory in: the rest, for our sins, it is well if we can improve and patiently bear. Yet in them we may rejoice, in hope of glory, though we glory not of them. Oh! if all the painful, languid days, and nights and years that I have had, as the fruit of my sin, had been sufferings for that which I am now hated and hunted for, even for preaching Christ when men forbid me,

how joyfully might I undergo it : but yet, even here, approaching glory should be my joy. Alas ! my groans and moans are too great, and my joy too little.

VIII. "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience." That which worketh patience is matter of joy : for patience doth us more good than tribulation can do hurt ; why, then, do I groan so much under suffering, and so little study and exercise patience and no more rejoice in the exercise thereof ?

IX. "And patience, experience." It is manifold and profitable experience, which patient suffering brings. It giveth us experience, as of nature's weakness, and the great need of faith ; so of the truth of God's promises, the love and tenderness of Christ, the acceptance of our prayers ; and the power of the Spirit's aid and grace. O what abundance of experiences of God and ourselves, and the vanity of creatures, had we wanted, if we had not waited in a suffering state : alas ! how many experiences have I forgotten.

X. "And experience, hope." A bare promise should give us hope : but we are still distrustful of ourselves, and of all the clearest evidences, till experience help us, and set all home. Oh, what an advantage hath a Christian of great and long experience for his hope and joy ! And yet when notable experiences of God's providence are past and gone, an unbelieving heart is ready to question, whether the things came not by mere natural course ; and, like the Israelites in the wilderness, dangers and fears bear down even long and great experiences. This is my sin.

XI. "And hope maketh not ashamed." That is, true hope of what God hath promised, shall never be disappointed. They that trust on deceitful creatures are deceived, and ashamed of their hope : for all men are liars, that is, untrusty ; but God is true, and ever faithful : O what a comfort it is that God commandeth me to trust him ! Sure such a command is a virtual promise, from him that cannot fail that trust which he commandeth. Lord, help me to trust thee in greatest dangers, and there to rest.

XII. "Because the love of God is shed abroad upon our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." It is the love of God shed abroad on our hearts by the Holy Ghost which must make us rejoice in hope of the glory of God, even in tribulation.

Here I must consider, I. What is meant by the love of God.
II. Why, and how, it is shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost.

I. By the love of God is meant the effects of his love. 1. His special grace. 2. The pleasant gust or sense of it.

God's love thus shed on the heart, presupposeth it expressed in the gospel and providence, and contains all these particulars.

1. The sanctifying of the soul by renewing grace. This is the giving of the Spirit, as he is given to all true Christians.

2. Herein the Holy Ghost makes us perceive the exceeding desirableness of the love of God, and maketh us most desire it.

3. He giveth the soul some easing hope of the love of God.

4. He quieteth the doubts, and fears, and trouble of the soul.

5. He raiseth our hopes, by degrees, to confident assurance.

6. Then the thoughts of God's love are pleasant to the soul, and give it such delight as we feel in the love and fruition of our most valued and beloved friends.

7. The soul in this state is as unapt to be jealous of God, or to question his love, as a good child or wife to question the love of a parent or husband, or to hear any that speak evil of them.

8. This, then, becomes the habitual state of the soul, in all changes, to live in the delightful sense of the love of God, as we do live in pleasure with our dearest friends.

O blessed state, and first fruits of heaven! and happy are they that do attain it. And though lower degrees have their degree of happiness, yet how far short are such, in goodness, amiableness, and comfort, of those that are thus rich in grace.

This presupposeth, 1. Knowledge of God and the gospel. 2. True belief, and hope. 3. A sincere and fruitful life. 4. Mortification as to idol worldly vanities. 5. A conviction of our sincerity in all this. 6. A conclusion that God doth love.

But yet it is somewhat above all this. A man may have all this in his mind and mouth, and yet want this gust of effused love upon his heart. These are the way to it, but not itself.

This is the greatest good on this side heaven; to which all wealth and honor, all fleshly pleasure and long life, all learning and knowledge, are unworthy to be once compared: briefly,

1. It is the flower and highest part of Gods image on man.
2. It is the soul's true communion with God, and fruition of him, which carnal men deride : even as our eye hath communion with the sun, and the flourishing earth enjoys its reviving heats.
3. It is that which all lower grace doth tend to, as childhood doth to manhood : and what is a world of infants, comparatively, good for?
4. It is that which most properly answereth the design of redemption, and the wonders of God's love therein ; and all the tenor of the gospel.
5. It is that which is most fully called the Spirit of God, or Christ in us : he hath lower works, but this is his great work, by which he possesseth us, as God's most pleasant habitation : "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of power and love, and a sound mind." (2 Tim. i. 7.)
6. It is only that which all men, in general, desire, I mean, the only satisfying content and pleasure that man is capable of on earth. All men would have quieting and constant pleasure ; and it is to be found in nothing else but the effused love of God.
7. It is that which will make every burden light, and all affliction easy : when the sense of God's love is still upon the soul, all pain and crosses will be but as blood-letting by the kindest physician, to save the patient's life. God will not be suspected, or grudged at, in suffering ; his love will sweeten all.
8. It will overcome abundance of temptations, which no men's wit, or learning, or knowledge of the words of Scripture, will overcome. No arguments will draw a loving child, or wife, from the parents, or husband, that they know doth love them. Love is the most powerful disputant.
9. It puts a mellow, pleasant sweetness into all our duties. When we hear the word, or receive the sacrament, it is to such a soul as pleasant food to the most healthful man ; when we pray, or praise God, it comes from a comforted heart, and excites and increaseth the comfort it comes from. Oh, who can be backward to draw near to God in prayer or meditation, who tasteth the sweetness of his love ! This is religion indeed, and tells us what its life, and use, and glory is. This is true walking with God in the best degree. When the

soul liveth in the taste of his love, the heart will be still with him, and that will be its pleasure. And God most delights in such a soul.

10. This it is that putteth the sweetest relish on all our mercies. Deny God's love, and you deny them all. If you taste not his love in them, you taste little more than a beast may taste; poor food and raiment is sweet, with the sense of the love of God. Had I more of this, I should lie down, and rise, and walk in pleasure and content. I could bear the loss of other things; and though nature will feel pains, I should have pleasure and peace in the midst of all my pains and groans. This is the white stone, the new name; no man well knoweth it who never felt it in himself.

There is no dying comfortably without this experienced taste of the love of God. This will draw up the desires of the soul; love tasted, casteth out fear: though God be holy and just, and judgment terrible, and hell intolerable, and the soul hath no distinct idea of its future state out of the body, and though we see not whither it is that we must go, the taste of God's love will make it go joyfully, as trusting him; as a child will go any whither in his father's power and hand.

But all the knowledge in the world without this, quiets not a departing soul. A man may write as many books, and preach as many sermons of heaven, as I have done, and speak of it, and think of almost nothing else, and yet till the soul be sweetened and comforted with the love of God shed abroad on it by the Holy Ghost, death and the next life will be rather a man's fear than his desire. And the common fear of death which we see in the far greater part even of godly persons doth tell us, that though they may have saving desires and hopes, yet this sense of God's love on the heart is rare.

What wonder, then, if our language, our converse, our prayers, have too little savor of it, and in comparison of joyful believers' duties, be but like green apples to the mellow ones.

My God, I feel what it is that I want, and I perceive what it is that is most desirable: Oh, let not guilt be so far unpardoned as to deprive my soul of this greatest good, which thou hast commended to me, and commanded, and which in my languishing and pains I so much need! Did I beg for wealth or honor, I might have

it to the loss of others. But thy love will make me more useful to all, and none will have the less for my enjoyment ; for thou, Lord, art enough for all ; even as none hath the less of the sunlight for my enjoying it. The least well-grounded hope of thy love is better than all the pleasures of the flesh ; but without some pleasant sense of it, alas ! what a withered, languishing thing is a soul ! Thy loving-kindness is better than life ; but if I taste it not, how shall I here rejoice in God, or bear my heavy burdens ?

O, let me not be a dishonor to thy family, where all have so great cause to honor thy bounty by their joy and hopes ; nor, by a sad and fearful heart, tempt men to think that thy love is not real and satisfactory. I can easily believe and admire thy greatness, and thy knowledge. Let it not be so hard to me to believe and taste thy goodness and thy love, which is as necessary to me.

If there be any thing (as surely there is) in which the divine nature and spirit of adoption consisteth, as above all the art and notions of religion, which are but like to other acquired knowledge, sure it must be this holy appetite and habitual inclination of the soul to God, by way of love, which is bred by an internal sense of his loveliness, and loving inclination to man ; which differenceth a Christian from other men, as a child differs towards his father, from strangers, or from common neighbors. Till the love of God be the very state and nature of the soul, (working here towards his honor, interests, word, and servants,) no man can say that he is God's habitation by the Spirit ; and how the heart will ever be thus habited, without believing God's love to us, it is hard to conceive.

Experience tells the world how strongly it constraineth persons to love one another, if they do but think that they are strongly beloved by one another. In the love that tends to marriage, if one that is inferior do but know that a person of far greater worth doth fervently love them, it almost puts a necessity and constraint on them for returns of love : nature can scarce choose but love in such a case. Love is the loadstone of love. A real taste of the love of God in saving souls by Christ and grace, is it that constraineth them to be holy ; that is, to be devoted to that God in love.

II. But this must as necessarily be the work of the Holy Ghost, and can be no more done without him than the earth can be illuminated, and the vegetables live, without the sun. But all the approaches of the Holy Spirit suffice not to produce this great effect, and give us the divine, holy nature.

The same sunshine hath three different effects on its objects.

1. On most things, as houses, stones, earth, it causeth nothing but accidents of heat, color, and motion.

2. On some things it causeth a seminal disposition to vegetable life, but not life itself.

3. In this disposed matter it causeth vegetable life itself.

So doth the Spirit of God, 1. operate on millions but lifeless accidents, as the sun on a stone wall. 2. On others dispose and prepare them to divine life. 3. On others so disposed it effecteth the divine life itself, when holy love is turned into a habit like to nature.

That none but the Holy Ghost doth make this holy change is evident ; for the effect cannot transcend the causes. 1. Nature alone is dark, and knoweth not the attractive amiableness of God, till illuminated ; nor can give us a satisfactory notice of God's special love to us.

2. Nature is guilty, and guilt breedeth fears of justice, and fear makes us become wild, and fly from God, lest he should hurt us.

3. Nature is under penal sufferings already ; and feeleth pain, fear, and many hurts, and foreseeeth death ; and under this is undisposed, of itself, to feel the pleasure of God's love.

4. Nature is corrupted and diverted to creature vanity, and its appetite goeth another way, and cannot cure itself, and make itself suitable to the amiableness of God.

5. God hateth wickedness, and wicked men ; and mere nature cannot secure us that we are saved from that enmity.

Diligence may do much to get religious knowledge, and words, and all that which I call the art of religion ; and God may bless this as a preparation to holy life and love. But till the soul's appetite incline, with desire, to God and holiness, divine things will not sweetly relish.

And this is a great comfort to the thoughts of the sanctified, that certainly their holy appetite, desire, and complacency, is the work of the Holy Ghost. For, 1. this secureth them of the love of God, of which it is the proper token. 2. And it assureth them of their union with Christ, when they live because he liveth, even by the Spirit, which is his seal and pledge. 3. And it proveth both a future life and their title to it : for God maketh not all this preparation for it by his Spirit in vain.

But alas ! if it were not a work that hath great impediment, it would not be so rare in the world. What is it in us, that keepeth the sun of love from so shining on us as to revive our souls into holy contentments and delight ?

It must be supposed, 1. that all God's gifts are free, and that he giveth not to all alike ; the wonderful variety of creatures proveth this. 2. The reasons of his differencing works are his own will, and inferior reasons are mostly unknown to us, of which he is not bound to give us an account.

3. But yet we see that God doth his works in a causal order, and one work prepareth for another ; and he maketh variety of capacities, which occasion variety of receptions and of gifts ; and he useth to give every thing that to which he hath brought it into the next capacity and disposition.

And therefore, in general, we may conclude that we feel not God's love shed abroad upon the heart, because the heart is undisposed, and is not in the next disposition thereto : and abused free-will hath been the cause of that. That we have grace, is to be ascribed to God : that we are without it, is to be ascribed to ourselves.

1. Heinous guilt of former sin may keep a soul much without the delights of divine love ; and the heinousness is not only in the greatness of the evil done, materially, but oft in our long and wilful committing of smaller sins, against knowledge, and conscience, and consideration. The Spirit thus grieved by hardened hearts, and wilful repulses, is not quickly and easily a Comforter to such a soul ; and when the sinner doth repent it leaveth him more in uncertainty of his sincerity when he thinks, ' I do but repent, purpose, and promise now ; and so I oft did, and yet returned the next temptation to

my sin : and how can I tell that my heart is not the same, and I should sin again if I had the same temptations.' O what doubts and perplexities doth oft wilful sinning prepare for !

2. And sins of omissions have here a great part. The sweetness of God's love is a reward which slothful servants are unmeet for. It follows a "Well done, good and faithful servant." There is needful a close attendance upon God, and devotedness to him, and improvement of gospel grace, and revelation, to make a soul fit for amicable, sweet communion with God ; all that will save a soul from hell will not do this.

He that will taste these divine love-tokens must, 1. Be no stranger to holy meditation and prayer, nor unconstant, cold, and cursory in them ; but must dwell and walk above with God. 2. And he must be wholly addicted to improve his Master's talents in the world, and make it his design and trade on earth to do all the good in the world he can ; and to keep his soul clean from the flesh, and worldly vanity. And to such a soul God will make known his love.

3. And alas ! how ordinarily doth some carnal affection corrupt the appetite of the soul ; when we grow too much in love with men's esteem, or with earthly riches, or when our throats or fancies can master us into obedience, or vain desires of meat, drink, recreation, dwelling, &c., the soul loseth its appetite to things divine ; and nothing relisheth where appetite is gone or sick. We cannot serve God and Mammon, and we cannot at once taste much pleasure both in God and Mammon. The old, austere Christians found the mortification of the fleshly lusts a great advantage to the soul's delight in God.

4. And many errors about God's nature and works much hinder us from feasting on his love.

5. And especially the slight and ignorant thoughts of Christ, and the wondrous workings of God's love in him.

6. And especially if our belief itself once shake, or be not well and firmly founded.

7. And our slight thoughts of the office and work of the Holy Ghost on souls, and our necessity of it, and our not begging and waiting for the Spirit's special help.

8. And lastly, our unfaithful forgetfulness of manifold experiences and testimonies of his love, which should still be as fresh before us.

Alas ! my soul, thou feelest thy defect, and knowest the hinderance, but what hope is there of remedy? Will God ever raise so low, so dull, so guilty a heart, to such a foretaste of glory, as is this effusion of his love by the Holy Ghost? The lightsome days in spring and summer, when the sun reviveth the late naked earth, and clothes it with delectable beauties, differs not more from night and winter, than a soul thus revived with the love of God doth differ from an unbelieving, formal soul.

Though this great change be above my power, the Spirit of God is not impotent, backward, barren, or inexorable. He hath appointed us means for so high a state; and he appointeth no means in vain. Were my own heart obedient to my commands, all these following I would lay upon it; yea, I will do it, and beg the help of God.

1. I charge thee, think not of God's goodness and love, as unproportionable to his greatness and his knowledge; nor overlook, in the whole frame of heaven and earth, the manifestation of one any more than of the other.

2. Therefore let not the wickedness and misery of the world tempt thee to think basely of all God's mercies to the world; nor the peculiar privileges of the churches draw thee to deny or contemn God's common mercies unto all.

3. I charge thee to make the study of Christ, and the great work of man's redemption by him, thy chiefest learning, and most serious and constant work; and in that wonderful glass to see the face of divine love, and to hear what is said of it by the Son from heaven; and to come boldly, as reconciled to God by him.

4. O see that thy repentance for former sins against knowledge, and conscience, and the motions of God's Spirit, be sound, and thoroughly lamented and abhorred, how small soever the matter was in itself; that so the doubt of thy sincerity keep not up doubts of God's acceptance.

5. Let thy dependence on the Holy Ghost, as given from Christ, be henceforth as serious and constant to thee as is the dependence

of the eye on the light of the sun, and of natural life upon its beat and motion. Beg hard for the Holy Spirit, and gladly entertain it.

6. Oh, never forget the many and great experiences thou hast had, these almost sixty years observed, of marvellous favor and providence of God, for soul and body, in every time, place, condition, relation, company, or change, thou hast been in ! Lose not all these love-tokens of thy Father, while thou art begging more.

7. Hearken not too much to pained flesh, and look not too much into the grave : but look out at thy prison windows to the Jerusalem above, and the heavenly society that triumph in glory.

8. Let all thy sure notices of a future life, and of the communion we have here with those above, draw thee to think that the great number of holy souls that are gone before thee, must needs be better than they were here ; and that they had the same mind, and heart, and way ; the same Savior, Sanctifier, and promise, that thou hast ; and therefore they are as pledges of felicity to thee. Thou hast joyfully lived with many of them here ; and is it not better to be with them there ? It is only the state of glory foreseen by faith, which most fully showeth us the greatness of God's love.

9. Exercise thyself in psalms of praise, and daily magnify the love of God, that the due mention of it may warm and raise thy love to him.

10. Receive all temptations against divine love with hatred and repulse ; especially temptations to unbelief : and as thou wouldest abhor a temptation to murder, or perjury, or any other heinous sin, as much abhor all temptations that would hide God's goodness, or represent him to thee as an enemy, or unlovely.

Thus God hath set the glass before us, in which we may see his amiable face. But alas ! souls in flesh are in great obscurity, and, conscious of their weakness, are still distrustful of themselves and doubt of all their apprehensions, till overpowering objects and influences satisfy and fix them. For this my soul with daily longings doth seek to thee, my God and Father : O pardon the sin that forfeits grace : I am ready to say, ' Draw nearer to me ; ' but it is meet to say, ' Open thou my eyes and heart, and remove all impediments, and undisposedness, that I may believe, and feel how near thou art, and hast been to me, while I perceived it not.'

XIII. It is God's love shed abroad on the heart by the Holy Ghost, which must make us "rejoice in hope of the glory of God :—" this will do it, and without this it will not be done.

This would turn the fears of death into joyful hopes of future life, If my God will thus warm my heart with his love, it will have these following effects in this matter.

1. Love longeth for union, or nearness, and fruition ; and it would make my soul long after God in glorious presence.

2. This would make it much easier to me to believe that there is certainly a future blessed life for souls ; while I even tasted how God loveth them. It is no hard thing to believe that the sun will give light and heat, and revive the frozen earth : nor that a father will show kindness to his son, or give him an inheritance. Why should it be hard to believe that God will glorify the souls whom he loveth, and that he will take them near himself ; and that thus it shall be done to those whom he delights to honor ?

3. This effusion of divine love would answer my doubts of the pardon of sin : I should not find it hard to believe that love itself, which hath given us a Savior, will forgive a soul that truly repenteth, and hates his sin, and giveth up himself to Christ for justification. It is hard to believe that a tyrant will forgive, but not that a father will pardon a returning prodigal son.

4. This effusion of divine love will answer my fears, which arise from mere weakness of grace and duty : indeed it will give no other comfort to an unconverted soul, but that he may be accepted if he come to God by Christ, with true faith and repentance ; and that this is possible. But it should be easy to be believe, that a tender father will not kill nor cast out a child for weakness, crying or uncleanness : divine love will accept and cherish even weak faith, weak prayer, and weak obedience and patience, which are sincere.

5. This effused love would confute temptations that are drawn from thy afflictions ; and make thee believe that they are not so bad as flesh representeth them : it would understand that every son that God loveth he chasteneth, that he may not be condemned with the world, and that he may be partaker of his holiness, and the end may be the quiet fruit of righteousness ; it would teach us to believe that

God in very faithfulness doth afflict us ; and that it is a good sign that the God of Love intendeth a better life for his beloved, when he trieth them with so many tribulations here : and though Lazarus be not saved for his suffering, it signified that God, who loved him, had a life of comfort for him, when he had his evil things on earth. When pangs are greatest, the birth is nearest.

6. Were love thus shed on the heart by the Holy Ghost, it would give me a livelier apprehension of the state of blessedness which all the faithful now enjoy : I should delightfully think of them as living in the joyful love of God, and ever fully replenished therewith. It pleaseth us to see the earth flourish in the spring ; and to see how pleasantly the lambs, and other young things will skip and play : much more to see societies of holy Christians loving each other and provoking one another to delight in God. O then what a pleasant thought should it be, to think how all our deceased, godly friends, and all that have so died since the creation, are now together in a world of divine, perfect love ! How they are all continually wrapped up in the love of God, and live in the delight of perfect love to one another !

O my soul, when thou art with them, thou wilt dwell in love, and feast on love and rest in love ; for thou wilt more fully dwell in God, and God in thee : and thou wilt dwell with none but perfect lovers : they would not silence thee from praising God in their assembly : tyrants, malignants, and persecutors, are more strange there (or far from thence) than toads, and snakes, and crocodiles, are from the bed or bedchamber of the king. Love is the air, the region, the world, they live in : love is their nature, their pulse, their breath, their constitution, their complexion, and their work : it is their life, and even themselves and all. Full loth would one of those spirits be to dwell again among blind Sodomites, and mad, self-damning malignants upon earth.

7. Yea, this effused love will teach us to gather the glory of the blessed from the common mercies of this life : doth God give his distracted, malignant enemies, health, wealth, plenty, pleasure, yea, lordships, dominions, crowns, and kingdoms ; and hath he not much better for beloved holy souls !

Yea, doth he give the brutes life, sense, delight, and beauty ; and hath he not better things for men ; for saints ?

There are some so blind as to think that man shall have no better hereafter, because brutes have not, but perish. But they know not how erroneously they think. The sensible souls of brutes are substance, and therefore are not annihilated at death : but God put them under us, and made them for us, and us more nearly for himself. Brutes have not faculties to know and love God, to meditate on him, or praise him, or, by moral agency, to obey his precepts : they desire not any higher felicity than they have : God will have us use their service, yea, their lives and flesh, to tell us they were made for us. He tells us not what he doth with them after death : but whatever it is, it is not annihilation, and it is like they are in a state still of service unto man : whether united, or how individuate, we know not : nor yet whether those philosophers are in the right, that think that this earth is but a small image of the vast superior regions, where there are kingdoms answerable to these here, where the spirits of brutes are in the like subjection in ærial bodies, to those low, rational spirits that inhabit the ærial regions, as in flesh they were to man in flesh. But it is enough for us that God hath given us faculties to know, love, praise, and obey him, and trust him for glory, which he never gave to them, because they were not made for things so high. Every creature's faculties are suited to their use and ends.

And love tells me, that the blessed God, who giveth to brutes that life, health, and pleasure, which they are made and fitted for, will give his servants that heavenly delight in the fullness of his love and praise, and mutual, joyful love to one another, which nature fundamentally, and grace more immediately, hath made them fit for.

Blessed Jehovah ! for what tastes of this effused love thou hast given me, my soul doth bless thee, with some degree of gratitude and joy : and for those further measures which I want, and long for, and which my pained, languid state much needs, and which would raise my joyful hopes of glory, I wait, I beg, from day to day. O give me now at the door of heaven, some fuller taste of the heavenly felicity : shed more abroad upon my heart, by the Holy Ghost, that love of thine, which will draw up my longing soul to thee, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.

A

SERMON OF REPENTANCE,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT

AT WESTMINSTER,

**AT THEIR LATE SOLEMN FAST FOR THE SET-
TLING OF THESE NATIONS,**

APRIL 30, 1660.

Tuesday, May 1, 1660.

ORDERED,

That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. BAXTER, for his great pains in carrying on the work of preaching and prayer, before the House, at Saint Margaret's, Westminster, yesterday, being set apart by this House, for a day of fasting and humiliation; and that he be desired to print his sermon, and is to have the same privilege in printing the same that others have had in the like kind, and that Mr. Swinfin do give him notice thereof.

W. JESSOP,

Clerk of the Commons' House of Parliament.

TO THE HONORABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT.

As your order for my preaching persuadeth me you meant attentively to hear, so your order for my publishing this sermon persuadeth me that you will vouchsafe considerably to read it; (for you would not command me to publish only for others that which was prepared for and suited to yourselves;) which second favor if I may obtain, especially of those that need most to hear the doctrine of repentance, I shall hope that the authority of the heavenly Majesty, the great concernment of the subject, and the evidence of reason, and piercing beams of sacred verity, may yet make a deeper impression on your souls, and promote that necessary work of holiness, the fruits whereof would be effectual remedies to the diseased nations, and would conduce to your own everlasting joy. Shall I think it were presumption for me to hope for so high a reward for so short a labor? Or shall I think it were uncharitableness not to hope for it? That here is nothing but plain English, without any of those ornaments that are by many thought necessary to make such discourses grateful to ingenious, curious auditors, proceeded not only from my present want of advantages for study, (having and using no book but a Bible and a Concordance,) but also from the humbling and serious nature of the work of the day and from my own inclination, less affecting such ornaments in sacred discourses than formally I have done. It is a very great honor that God and you have put upon me, to conclude so solemn a day of prayer, which was answered the next morning by your speedy, and cheerful, and unanimous acknowledgment of His Majesty's authority. May I have but the second part, to promote your salvation, and the happiness of this land, by your considering and obeying these necessary truths, what greater honor could I expect on earth? Or how could you more oblige me to remain

A daily petitioner to heaven for these mercies,
on your own and the nation's behalf,

RICHARD BAXTER.

SERMON OF REPENTANCE.

EZEK. xxxvi. 31.

Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.

THE words are a part of God's prognostics of the Jews' restoration, whose dejection he had before described. Their disease began within, and there God promiseth to work the cure. Their captivity was but the fruit of their voluntary captivity to sin, and their grief of heart was but the fruit of their hardness of heart, and their sharpest suffering of their soul pollutions, and therefore God promiseth a methodical cure, even to take away their old and stony heart, and cleanse them from their filthiness, and so to ease them by the removing of the cause. How far, and when, this promise was to be made good to the Jews, as nationally considered, is a matter that requires a longer disposition than my limited hour will allow, and the decision of that case is needless, as to my present end and work. That this is part of the gospel covenant, and applicable to us believers now, the Holy Ghost, in the epistle to the Hebrews, hath assured us.

The text is the description of the repentance of the people, in which the beginning of their recovery doth consist, and by which the rest must be attained. The evil which they repent of is, in general, all their iniquities, but especially their idolatry, called their abominations. Their repentance is foretold, as it is in the understanding and thoughts, and as in the will and affections. In the former, it is called "remembering their own evil ways." In the latter, it is called "loathing themselves in their own sight, for their iniquities and abominations." Montanus translates it *reprobabit in vos*; but in c. 20, v. 43, *fastidietis vos*. The same sense is intended by the other ver-

sions. When the Septuagint translates it by displeasure, and the Chaldee by groaning, and the Syriac by the wrinkling of the face, and the Sept., in c. xx. 43, by smiting on the face ; the Arabic here perverts the sense by turning all to negatives, ye shall not, &c., yet in c. xx. 43. he turns it by the tearing of the face. I have purposely chosen a text that needs no long explication, that in obedience to the the foreseen straits of time I may be excused from that part, and be more on the more necessary. This observation contains the meaning of the text, which by God's assistance, I shall now insist on, viz. :

The remembering of their own iniquities, and loathing themselves for them, is the sign of a repenting people, and the prognostic of their restoration, so far as deliverance may be here expected.

For the opening of which, observe these things following.

2. It is not all kind of remembering that will prove you penitent. The impenitent remember their sin that they may commit it ; they remember it with love, desire, and delight ; the heart of the worldling goeth after his airy or earthen idol. The heart of the ambitious feedeth on his vain glory, and the people's breath ; and the filthy fornicator is delighted in the thoughts of the object and exercise of his lust. But it is a remembering, 1. From a deep conviction of the evil and odiousness of sin. 2. And with abhorrence and self-loathing. 3. That leadeth to a resolved and vigilant forsaking, that is the proof of true repentance, and the prognostic of a people's restoration.

3. And it is not all self-loathing that will signify true repenting, for there is a self-loathing of the desperate and the damned soul that abhorreth itself, and teareth and tormenteth itself, and cannot be restrained from self-revenge, when it finds that it hath wilfully, foolishly, and obstinately been its own destroyer. But the self-loathing of the truly penitent hath these following properties :

1. It proceedeth from the predominant love of God, whom we have abused and offended. The more we love him, the more we loathe what is contrary to him.

2. It is much excited by the observation and sense of his exceeding mercies, and is conjunct with gratitude.

3. It continueth and increaseth under the greatest assurance of forgiveness, and sense of love, and dieth not when we think we are out of danger.

4. It containeth a loathing of sin as sin, and a love of holiness as such, and not only a love of ease and peace, and a loathing of sin, as the cause of suffering.

5. It resolveth the soul against returning to its former course, and resolveth it for an entire devotedness to God for the time to come.

6. It deeply engageth the penitent in a conflict against the flesh, and maketh him victorious, and setteth him to work in a life of holiness, as his trade and principal business in the world.

7. It bringeth him to a delight in God and holiness, and a delight in himself, so far as he findeth God and heaven, and holiness within him. He can, with some comfort and content, own himself and his conversation, so far as God (victorious against his carnal self) appeareth in him. For as he loveth Christ in the rest of his members, so must he in himself. And this is it that self-loathing doth prepare for.

This must be the self-loathing that must afford you comfort, as a penitent people in the way to restoration.

1. Where you see it is implied, that materially it containeth these common acts. 1. Accusing and condemning thoughts against ourselves. It is a judging of ourselves, and makes us call ourselves with Paul, foolish, disobedient, deceived; yea, mad; (as Acts xxvi. 11;) and with David to say, I have done foolishly. (2 Sam. xxiv. 10.) 2. It containeth a deep distaste and displeasure with ourselves, and a heart rising against ourselves. 3. As also an holy indignation against ourselves, as apprehending that we have played the enemies to ourselves and God. 4. And it possesseth us with grief and trouble at our miscarriages. So that a soul in this condition is sick of itself, and vexed with its self-procured wo.

2. Note also that when self-loathing proceedeth from mere conviction, and is without the love of God and holiness, it is but the tormentor of the soul, and runs it deeper into sin, provoking men here to destroy their lives; and in hell it is the never-dying worm.

3. Note also, that it is themselves that they are said to loathe, because it is ourselves that conscience hath to do with, as witness, and

as judge; it is ourselves that are naturally nearest to ourselves, and our own affairs that we are most concerned in. It is ourselves that must have the joy or torment, and therefore it is our own actions and estate that we have first to mind. Though yet, as magistrates, ministers, and neighbors, we must next mind others, and must loathe iniquity wherever we meet it, and a vile person must be condemned in our eyes, while we honor them that fear the Lord. (Psalm xv. 4.)

And as by nature, so in the commandment, God hath given to every man the first and principal care and charge of himself, and his own salvation, and consequently of his own ways, so that we may with less suspicion loathe ourselves than others, and are more obliged to do it.

4. Note also, that it is not for our troubles, or our disgrace, or our bodily deformities, or infirmities, or for our poverty and want, that penitents are said to loathe themselves, but for their iniquities and abominations. For, 1. This loathing is a kind of justice done upon ourselves, and therefore is exercised, not for mere infelicities, but for crimes. Conscience keepeth in its own court, and meddeth but with moral evils, which we are conscious of. 2. And also it is sin that is loathed by God, and makes the creature loathsome in his eyes; and repentance conformeth the soul to God, and therefore causeth us, to loathe as he doth, and on his grounds. And, 3. There is no evil but sin, and that which sin procureth, and therefore it is for sin that the penitent loathes himself.

5. Note also, that it is here implied, that, till repentance, there was none of this remembering of sin, and loathing of themselves. They begin with our conversion, and, as before described, are proper to the truly penitent. For, to consider them distinctly, 1. The deluded soul that is bewitched by his own concupiscence, is so taken up with remembering of his fleshly pleasures, and his alluring objects, and his honors, and his earthly businesses and store, that he hath no mind or room for the remembering of his foolish, odious sin, and the wrong that he is doing to God, and to himself. Death is oblivious, and sleep hath but a distracted ineffectual memory, that stirreth not the busy dreamer from his pillow, nor despatcheth any of the work.

he dreams of. And the unconverted are asleep, and dead in sin. The crowd of cares and worldly businesses, and the tumultuous noise of foolish sports, and other sensual passions and delights, do take up the minds of the unconverted, and turn them from the observation, of the things of greatest everlasting consequence. They have a memory for sin and the flesh, to which they are alive, but not for things spiritual and eternal, to which they are dead. They remember not God himself as God, with any effectual remembrance. God is not in all their thoughts. (Psal. x. 4.) They live as without him in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) And if they remember not God, they cannot remember sin as sin, whose malignity lieth in its opposition to the will and holiness of God. They forget themselves, and therefore must needs forget their sinfulness. Alas! they remember not effectually and savingly, what they are, and why they were made, and what they are daily nourished and preserved for, and what business they have to do here in the world. They forget that they have souls to save or lose, that must live in endless joy or torment. You may see by their careless and ungodly lives that they forget it. You may hear by their carnal frothy speech that they forget it. And he that remembereth not himself, remembereth not his own concerns. They forget the end to which they tend; the life which they must live forever; the matters everlasting, whose greatness and duration, one would think, should so command the mind of man, and take up all his thoughts and cares in despite of all the little trifling matters that would avert them, that we should think almost of nothing else. Yet these, even these, that nothing but deadness or madness should make a reasonable creature to forget, are daily forgotten by the unconverted soul, or ineffectually remembered. Many a time have I admired that men of reason who are here to-day, and in endless joy or misery to-morrow, should be able to forget such inexpressible concerns! Methinks they should easier forget to rise, or dress themselves, or to eat, or drink, or any thing, than forget an endless life, which is so undoubtedly certain, and so near. A man that hath a cause to be heard to-morrow, in which his life or honor is concerned, cannot forget it; a wretch that is condemned to die to-morrow, cannot forget it. And yet poor sinners, that are con-

tinually uncertain to live an hour, and certain speedily to see the majesty of the Lord, to their unconceivable joy or terror, as sure as now they live on earth, can forget these things for which they have their memory ; and which one would think should drown the matters of this world, as the report of a cannon doth a whisper, or as the sun obscureth the poorest glow-worm. O wonderful stupidity of an un-renewed soul ! O wonderful folly and distractedness of the ungodly ! That ever man can forget, I say again, that they can forget, eternal joy, eternal wo, and the Eternal God, and the place of their eternal, unchangeable abode, when they stand even at the door, and are passing in, and there is but the thin veil of flesh between them and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf ; and they are daily dying, and even stepping in. O could you keep your honors here for ever ; could you ever wear that gay attire, and gratify your flesh with meats, and drinks, and sports, and lusts ; could you ever keep your rule and dignity, or your earthly life in any state, you had some little poor excuse for not remembering the eternal things, (as a man hath, that preferreth his candle before the sun,) but when death is near and inexorable, and you are sure to die as you are sure to live ; when every man of you that sitteth in these seats to day can say, 'I must shortly be in another world, where all the pomp and pleasure of this world will be forgotten, or remembered but as my sin and folly,' one would think it were impossible for any of you to be ungodly, and to remember the trifles and nothings of the world, while you forget that everlasting all, whose reality, necessity, magnitude, excellency, concernment, and duration are such, as should take up all the powers of your souls, and continually command the service and attendance of your thoughts against all seekers, and contemptible competitors whatsoever. But alas, though you have the greatest helps, (in subservience to these commanding objects,) yet will you not remember the matters which alone deserve remembrance. Sometimes the preachers of the gospel do call on you to remember ; to remember your God, your souls, your Savior, your ends, and everlasting state, and to remember your misdoings, that you may loath yourselves, and in returning may find life ; but some either scorn them, or quarrel with them, or sleep under their most serious and importunate solicitations,

or carelessly and stupidly give them the hearing, as if they spoke but words of course, or treated about uncertain things, and spoke not to them from the God of heaven, and about the things that every man of you shall very shortly see or feel. Sometimes you are called on by the voice of conscience within, to remember the unreasonableness and evil of your ways ; but conscience is silenced, because it will not be conformable to your lusts. But little do you think what a part your too late awakened conscience hath yet to play, if you give it not a more sober hearing in time. Sometimes the voice of common calamities, and national or local judgments, call on you to remember the evil of your ways ; but that which is spoken to all, or many, doth seem to most of them as spoken unto none. Sometimes the voice of particular judgments, seizing upon your families, persons or estates, doth call on you to remember the evil of your ways ; and one would think the rod should make you hear. And yet you most disregardfully go on, or are only frightened into a few good purposes and promises, that die when health and prosperity revive. Sometimes God joineth all these together, and pleadeth both by word and rod, and addeth also the inward pleadings of his Spirit ; he sets your sins in order before you, (Psalm 1. 21,) and expostulateth with you the cause of his abused love, despised sovereignty, and provoked justice ; and asketh the poor sinner, ‘ Hast thou done well to waste thy life in vanity, to serve thy flesh, to forget thy God, thy soul, thy happiness ; and to thrust his services into corners, and give him but the odious leavings of the flesh ?’ But these pleas of God cannot be heard. O horrible impiety ! By his own creatures ; by reasonable creatures (that would scorn to be called fools or madmen) the God of heaven cannot be heard ! The brutish, passionate, furious sinners will not remember. They will not remember what they have done, and with whom it is that they have to do, and what God thinks and saith of men in their condition ; and whither it is that the flesh will lead them ; and what will be the fruit and end of all their lusts and vanities ; and how they will look back on all at last ; and whether an holy or a sensual life will be sweetest to a dying man ; and what judgment it is that they will all be of, in the controversy between the flesh and Spirit, at the latter end. Though they have life and time, and reason for

their uses, we cannot entreat them to consider of these things in time. If our lives lay on it, as their salvation, which is more, lieth on it, we cannot entreat them. If we should kneel to them, and with tears beseech them, but once a day, or once a week, to bestow one hour in serious consideration of their latter end, and the everlasting state of saints and sinners, and of the equity of the holy ways of God, and the iniquity of their own, we cannot prevail with them. Till the God of heaven doth overrule them we cannot prevail. The witness that we are forced to bear is sad ; it is sad to us ; but it will be sadder to these rebels that shall one day know that God will not be outfaced ; and that they may sooner shake the stable earth, and darken the sun by their reproaches, than outbrave the Judge of all the world, or by all their cavils, wranglings, or scorns, escape the hands of his revenging justice.

But if ever the Lord will save these souls, he will bring their misdoings to their remembrance. He will make them think of that which they were so loth to think on. You cannot now abide these troubling and severe meditations ; the thoughts of God, and heaven, and hell ; the thoughts of your sins, and of your duties, are melancholy, unwelcome thoughts to you ; but O that you could foreknow the thoughts that you shall have of all these things ! Even the proudest, scornful, hardened sinner, that heareth me this day, shall shortly have such a remembrance, as will make him wonder at his present blockishness. O when the irresistible power of heaven shall open all your sins before you, and command you to remember them, and to remember the time, and place, and persons, and all the circumstances of them, what a change will it make upon the most stout or stubborn of the sons of men ; what a difference will there then be between that trembling, self-tormenting soul, and the same that now in his gallantry can make light of all these things, and call the messenger of Christ who warneth him, a puritan, or a doating fool ! Your memories now are somewhat subject to your wills ; and if you will not think of your own, your chief, your everlasting concerns, you may choose. If you will choose rather to employ your noble souls on beastly lusts, and waste your thoughts on things of naught, you may take your course, and chase a feather with a childish world,

till, overtaking it, you see you have lost your labor. But when justice takes the work in hand, your thoughts shall be no more subject to your wills; you shall then remember that which you are full loath to remember, and would give a world that you could forget. O then one cup of the waters of oblivion would be of inestimable value to the damned! O what would they not give that they could but forget the time they had lost, the mercy they abused, the grace which they refused, the holy servants of Christ whom they despised, the wilful sins which they committed, and the many duties which they wilfully omitted! I have often thought of their case when I have dealt with melancholy or despairing persons. If I advised them to cast away such thoughts, and turn their minds to other things, they tell me they cannot; it is not in their power; and I have long found that I may almost as well persuade a broken head to give over aching. But when the holy God shall purposely pour out the vials of his wrath on the consciences of the ungodly, and open the books, and show them all that ever they have done, with all the aggravations, how then shall these worms be able to resist?

And now I beseech you all, consider, is it not better to remember your sins on earth, than in hell? before your physician, than before your Judge? for your cure, than for your torment? Give me leave, then, before I go any further, to address myself to you as the messenger of the Lord, with this importunate request, both as you stand here in your private, and your public capacities. In the name of the God of heaven, I charge you, remember the lives that you have led! remember what you have been doing in the world! remember how you have spent your time! and whether, indeed, it is God that you have been serving, and heaven that you have been seeking, and holiness and righteousness that you have been practising in the world till now! Are your sins so small, so venial, so few, that you can find no employment on them for your memories? Or is the offending of the Eternal God so slight and safe a thing as not to need your consideration? God forbid you should have such atheistical conceits! Surely God made not his laws for nought; nor doth he make such a stir by his word, and messengers, and providences, against an harmless thing; nor doth he threaten hell to men for small, indifferent

matters ; nor did Christ need to have died, and done all that he hath done, to cure a small and safe disease. Surely that which the God of heaven is pleased to threaten with everlasting punishment, the greatest of you all should vouchsafe to think on, and with greatest fear and soberness to remember.

It is a pitiful thing, that with men, with gentlemen, with professed Christians, God's matters, and their own matters, their greatest matters, should seem unworthy to be thought on ; when they have thoughts for their honors, and their lands, and friends ; and thoughts for their children, their servants, and provision ; and thoughts for their horses, and their dogs, and sports. Is God and heaven less worthy than these ? are death and judgment matters of less moment ? Gentlemen, you would take it ill to have your wisdom undervalued, and your reason questioned ; for your honor's sake do not make it contemptible yourselves in the eyes of all that are truly wise. It is the nobleness of objects that most ennobles your faculties, and the baseness of objects doth abase them. If brutish objects be your employment and delight, do I need to tell you what you make yourselves ? If you would be noble indeed, let God and everlasting glory be the object of your faculties ; if you would be great, then dwell on greatest things ; if you would be high, then seek the things that are above, and not the sordid things of earth, (Col. iii. 1—3,) and if you would be safe, look after the enemies of your peace ; and as you had thoughts of sin that led you to commit it, entertain the thoughts that would lead you to abhor it. O that I might have but the grant of this reasonable request from you, that among all your thoughts you would bestow now and then an hour in the serious thoughts of your misdoings, and soberly in your retirement between God and your souls remember the paths that you have trod ; and whether you have lived for the work for which you were created ; One sober hour of such employment might be the happiest hour that ever you spent, and give you more comfort at your final hour, than all the former hours of your life ; and might lead you into that new and holy life, which you may review with everlasting comfort.

Truly, gentlemen, I have long observed that Satan's advantage lieth so much on the brutish side, and that the work of man's com-

version is so much carried on by God's exciting of our reason ; and that the misery of the ungodly is, that they have reason in faculty, and not in use, in the greatest thing, that I persuade you to this duty with the greater hopes : if the Lord will but persuade you to retire from vanity, and soberly exercise your reason, and consider your ways, and say, what have we done ? And what is it that God would have us do ? And what shall we wish we had done at last ? I say, could you now be but prevailed with to bestow as many hours on this work, as you have cast away in idleness, or worse, I should not doubt but I should shortly see the faces of many of you in heaven that have been recovered by the use of this advice. It is a thousand pities, that men are thought wise enough to be entrusted with the public safety, and to be the physicians of a broken state, should have any among them that are untrusty to their God, and have not the reason to remember their misdoings, and prevent the danger of their immortal souls. Will you sit all day here to find out the remedy of a diseased land ; and will you not be entreated by God or man to sit down one hour, and find out the disease of, and remedy for, your own souls ? Are those men likely to take care of the happiness of so many thousands, that will still be so careless of themselves ? Once more therefore, I entreat you, remember your misdoings, lest God remember them : and bless the Lord that called you this day, by the voice of mercy, to remember them upon terms of faith and hope. Remembered they must be, first or last. And believe it, this is far unlike the sad remembrance at judgment, and in the place of woe and desperation.

And I beseech you observe here, that it is your own misdoings that you must remember. Had it been only the sins of other men, especially those that differ from you, or have wronged you, or stand against your interest, how easily would the duty have been performed ? How little need should I have had to press it with all this importunity ? How confident should I be that I could convert the most, if this were the conversion ? It grieves my soul to hear how quick and constant, high and low, learned and unlearned, are at this uncharitable, contumelious remembering of the faults of others : how cunningly they can bring in their insinuated accusations : how odious-

ly they can aggravate the smallest faults; where difference causeth them to distaste the person : how ordinarily they judge of actions by the persons, as if any thing were a crime that is done by such as they dislike, and all were virtue that is done by those that fit their humors : how commonly brethren have made it a part of their service of God to speak or write uncharitably of his servants, laboring to destroy the hearer's charity, which had more need, in this unhappy time, of the bellows than the water : how usual it is with the ignorant that cannot reach the truth, and the impious that cannot bear it, to call such heretics that know more than themselves, and to call such precisians, puritans, (or some such name which hell invents as there is occasion,) who dare not be so bad as they : how odious, men pretending to much gravity, learning, and moderation, do labor to make those that are dearer to God ; and what a heart they have to widen differences, and make a sea of every lake ; and that, perhaps, under pretence of blaming the uncharitableness of others : how far the very sermons and discourses of some learned men are from the common rule of doing as we would be done by : and how loudly they proclaim that such men love not their neighbors as themselves ; the most uncharitable words seeming moderate, which they give ; and all called intemperate that savored not of flattery, which they receive ! Were I calling the several exasperated factions now in England to remember the misdoings of their supposed adversaries, what full-mouthed and debasing confessions would they make ! What monsters of heresy, and schism, of impiety, treason, and rebellion, of perjury and perfidiousness, would too many make of the faults of others, while they extenuate their own to almost nothing ! It is a wonder to observe how the case doth alter with the most, when that which was their adversary's case becomes their own. The very prayers of the godly, and their care of their salvation, and their fear of sinning, doth seem their crime in the eyes of some that easily bear the guilt of swearing, drunkenness, sensuality, filthiness, and neglect of duty in themselves, as a tolerable burden.

But if ever God indeed convert you, (though you will pity others, yet) he will teach you to begin at home, and take the beam out of your own eyes, and to cry out, ' I am the miserable sinner.'

into the kingdom of heaven ;” (John iii. 3—5 ; Matt. xviii. 3 ;) that “ if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ;” (Rom. viii. 9 ;) that “ if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are past away, and all things are become new ;” (2 Cor. v. 17 ;) that “ without holiness none shall see God ;” (Heb. xii. 14 ;) that “ the wisdom that is from above is first pure, and then peaceable ;” (Jam. iii. 17 ;) that “ God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit, and in truth ;” (John iv. 23, 24 ;) that “ they worship in vain that teach for doctrines the commandments of men ;” (Matt. xv. 8, 9 ;) and that “ except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. v. 20.) And I desire you to remember that “ it is hard to kick against the pricks, and to prosper in rage against the Lord : and that it is better for that man that offendeth one of his little ones to have a millstone fastened to his neck, and to have been cast into the bottom of the sea. (Matt. xviii. 6.) It is a sure and grievous condemnation that waiteth for all that are themselves unholy : but to the haters or despisers of the holy laws and servants of the Lord how much more grievous a punishment is reserved !

3. Inquire also whether there be none among you that let loose your passions on your inferiors, and oppress your poor tenants, and make them groan under the task, or at least do little to relieve the needy, nor study not to serve the Lord with your estates, but sacrifice all to the pleasing of your flesh, unless it be some inconsiderable pittance, or fruitless drops, that are unproportionable to your receivings. If there be any such, let them remember their iniquities, and cry for mercy before the cry of the poor to heaven do bring down vengeance from him that hath promised to hear their cry, and speedily to avenge them. (Luke xviii. 7, 8.)

4. Inquire whether there be none that live the life of Sodom, in pride, fulness of bread, and idleness ; (Ezek. xvi. 49 ;) and that are puffed up with their estates and dignities, and are strangers to the humility, meekness, patience, and self-denial of the saints : that ruffle in bravery, and contend more zealously for their honor and pre-eminence, than for the honor and interest of the Lord. For pride

of apparel, it was wont to be taken for a childish or womanish kind of vice, below a man ; but it is now observed among the gallants, that (except in spots) the notes of vanity are more legibly written on the hair and dress of a multitude of effeminate males, than on the females ; proclaiming to the world that pride, which one would think even pride itself should have concealed ; and calling by these signs to the beholders to observe the emptiness of their minds, and how void they are of that inward worth, which is the honor of a Christian, and of a man. It being a marvel to see a man of learning, gravity, wisdom, and the fear of God, appear in such antic dress.

I have done with the first part, "the remembering of your own evil ways and doings." I beseech you practically go along with me to the next ; "The loathing of yourselves in your own eyes, for all your iniquities and abominations."

Every true convert doth thus loathe himself for his iniquities : and when God will restore a punished people upon their repentance he bringeth them to this loathing of themselves.

1. A converted soul hath a new and heavenly light to help him to see those matters of humbling use, which others see not.

2. More particularly, he hath the knowledge of sin, and of himself. He seeth the odious face of sin, and seeth how much his heart and life in his sinful days abounded with it, and how great a measure yet remains.

3. He hath seen by faith the Lord himself ; the majesty, the holiness, the jealousy, the goodness of the eternal God whom he hath offended, and therefore must needs abhor himself. (Job xlii. 6.)

4. He hath tasted of God's displeasure against him for his sin already. God himself hath set it home, and awakened his conscience, and held it on, till he hath made him understand that the consuming fire is not to be jested with.

5. He hath seen Christ crucified, and mourned over him. This is the glass that doth most clearly show the ugliness of sin, and here he hath learned to abhor himself.

6. He hath foreseen, by faith, the end of sin, and the doleful recompense of the ungodly ; his faith beholdeth the misery of damned souls, and the glory which sinners cast away. He heareth

them beforehand, repenting, and lamenting, and crying out of their former folly, and wishing in vain that all this were to do again, and that they might once more be tried with another life, and resolving then how holily, how self-denyingly they would live ! He knows that if sin had had its way he had been plunged into this hellish misery himself ; and therefore he must needs loathe himself for his iniquities.

7. Moreover, the true convert hath had the liveliest taste of mercy, of the blood of Christ, of the offers and covenant of grace, of reprieving mercy, of pardoning mercy, of healing and preserving mercy, and of the unspeakable mercy contained in the promise of everlasting life ; and to find that he hath sinned against all this mercy doth constrain him to abhor himself.

8. And it is only the true convert that hath a new and holy nature, contrary to sin ; and, therefore, as a man that hath the leprosy doth loathe himself because his nature is contrary to his disease, so is it (though operating in a freer way) with a converted soul as to the leprosy of sin. Oh ! how he loathes the remnants of his pride and passion ; his excessive cares, desires, and fears ; the backwardness of his soul to God and heaven ! Sin is to the new nature of every true believer, as the food of a swine to the stomach of a man ; if he have eaten it, he hath no rest until he hath vomited it up ; and then when he looketh on his vomit, he loatheth himself to think how long he kept such filth within him ; and that yet in the bottom there is some remains.

9. The true convert is one that is much at home, his heart is the vineyard which he is daily dressing, his work is ordinarily about it, and, therefore, he is acquainted with those secret sins, and daily failings, which ungodly men that are strangers to themselves do not observe, though they have them in dominion.

10. Lastly, a serious Christian is a workman of the Lord's, and daily busy at the exercise of his graces, and, therefore, hath occasion to observe his weaknesses, and failings, and from sad experience is forced to abhor himself.

But with careless unrenewed souls it is not so ; some of them may have a mild, ingenuous disposition, and the knowledge of their unworthiness ; and customarily they will confess such sins as are small

disgrace to them, or cannot be hid ; or under the terrible grips of conscience, in the hour of distress, and at the approach of death, they will do more ; and abhor themselves, perhaps, as Judas did ; or make a constrained confession through the power of fear ; but so far are they from this loathing of themselves for all their iniquities, that sin is to them as their element, their food, their nature, and their friend.

And now, honorable, worthy, and beloved auditors, it is my duty to inquire, and to provoke you to inquire, whether the representative body of the Commons of England, and each man of you in particular, be thus affected to yourselves or not. It concerns you to inquire of it, as you love your souls, and love not to see the death marks of impenitency on them. It concerneth us to inquire of it, as we love you and the nation, and would fain see the marks of God's return in mercy to us, in your self-loathing and return to God. Let conscience speak as before the Lord that sees your hearts, and will shortly judge you ; have you had such a sight of your natural and actual sin and misery, of your neglect of God, your contempt of heaven, your loss of precious, hasty time, your worldly, fleshly, sensual lives, and your omission of the great and holy works which you were made for ? Have you had such a sight and sense of these as hath filled your souls with shame and sorrow, and caused you in tears or hearty grief, to lament your sinful, careless lives, before the Lord ? Do you loathe yourselves for all this, as being vile in your own eyes, and each man say, ' What a wretch was I ! what an unreasonable, self-hating wretch, to do all this against myself ! what an unnatural wretch ! what a monster of rebellion and ingratitude, to do all this against the Lord of love and mercy ! what a deceived, foolish wretch, to prefer the pleasing of my lusts and senses, a pleasure that perisheth in the fruition, and is past as soon as it is received, before the manly pleasures of the saints, and before the soul's delight in God, and before the unspeakable everlasting pleasures ! Was there any comparison between the brutish pleasures of the flesh, and the spiritual delights of a believing soul, in looking to the endless pleasure which we shall have with all the saints and angels in the glorious presence of the Lord ? Was God and glory


worth no more, than to be cast aside for satiating of an unsatisfiable flesh and fancy, and to be sold for a harlot, for a forbidden cup, for a little air of popular applause, or for a burdensome load of wealth and power, for so short a time? Where is now the gain and pleasure of all my former sins? What have they left but a sting behind them? How near is the time when my departing soul must look back on all the pleasures and profits that ever I enjoyed, as a dream when one awaketh; as delusory vanities, that have done all for me that ever they will do, and all is but to bring my flesh unto corruption, (Gal. vi. 8,) and my soul to this distressing grief and fear! and then I must sing and laugh no more! I must brave it out in pride no more! I must know the pleasures of the flesh no more! but be levelled with the poorest, and my body laid in loathsome darkness, and my soul appear before that God whom I so wilfully refused to obey and honor. O wretch that I am! where was my understanding, when I played so boldly with the flames of hell, the wrath of God, the poison of sin! when God stood by and yet I sinned! when conscience did rebuke me, and yet I sinned! when heaven or hell were hard at hand, and yet I sinned! when, to please my God, and save my soul, I would not forbear a filthy lust, or forbidden vanity of no worth! when I would not be persuaded to a holy, heavenly, watchful life, though all my hopes of heaven lay on it! I am ashamed of myself; I am confounded in the remembrance of my wilful, self-destroying folly! I loathe myself for all my abominations; O that I had lived in beggary and rags when I lived in sin! And O that I had lived with God in a prison, or in a wilderness, when I refused a holy, heavenly life, for the love of a deceitful world! Will the Lord pardon what is past, I am resolved through his grace to do so no more, but to loathe that filth that I took for pleasure, and to abhor that sin that I made my sport, and to die to the glory and riches of the world, which I made my idol; and to live entirely to that God that I did so long ago and so unworthily neglect; and to seek that treasure, that kingdom, that delight, that will fully satisfy my expectation, and answer all my care and labor, with such infinite advantage. Holiness or nothing shall be my work and life, and heaven or nothing shall be my portion and felicity.

These are the thoughts, the affections, the breathing of every regenerate, gracious soul. For your souls' sake inquire now, is it thus with you? Or have you thus returned with self-loathing to the Lord, and firmly engaged your souls to him at your entrance into a holy life? I must be plain with you, gentlemen, or I shall be unfaithful; and I must deal closely with you, or I cannot deal honestly and truly with you. As sure as you live, yea, as sure as the word of God is true, you must all be such converted men, and loathe yourselves for your iniquities, or be condemned as impenitent to everlasting fire. To hide this from you is but to deceive you, and that in a matter of a thousand times greater moment than your lives. Perhaps I could have made shift, instead of such serious admonitions, to have wasted this hour in flashy oratory, and neat expressions, and ornaments of reading, and other things that are the too common matters of ostentation with men that preach God's word in jest, and believe not what they are persuading others to believe. Or if you think I could not, I am indifferent, as not much affecting the honor of being able to offend the Lord, and wrong your souls, by dallying with holy things. Flattery in these things of soul concernment is a selfish villany, that hath but a very short reward, and those that are pleased with it to-day, may curse the flatterer for ever. Again, therefore, let me tell you that which I think you will confess, that it is not your greatness, nor your high looks, nor the gallantry of your spirits that scorns to be thus humbled, that will serve your turn when God shall deal with you, or save your carcasses from rottenness and dust, or your guilty souls from the wrath of the Almighty. Nor is it your contempt of the threatenings of the Lord, and your stupid neglect, or scorning at the message, that will endure when the sudden, irresistible light shall come in upon you, and convince you, or you shall see and feel what now you refuse to believe! Nor is it your outside, hypocritical religion, made up of mere words, or ceremonies, and giving your souls but the leavings of the flesh, and making God an underling to the world, that will do any more to save your souls than the picture of a feast to feed your bodies. Nor is it the stiffest conceits that you shall be saved in an unconverted state, or that you are sanctified when you are not, that will do any more to keep you from damnation than :

conceit, that you shall never die, will do to keep you here for ever. Gentlemen, though you are all here in health and dignity, and honor, to day, how little a while is it, alas ! how little, until you shall be every man in heaven or hell ! Unless you are infidels you dare not deny it. And it is only Christ and a holy life that is your way to heaven ; and only sin, and the neglect of Christ and holiness, that can undo you. Look, therefore, upon sin as you should look on that which would cast you into hell, and is daily undermining all your hopes. O that this honorable assembly could know it in some measure as it shall be shortly known ! and judge of it as men do, when time is past, and delusions vanished, and all men are awakened from their fleshly dreams, and their naked souls have seen the Lord ! O then what laws would you make against sin ! How speedily would you join your strength against it as against the only enemy of your peace, and as against a fire in your houses, or a plague that were broken out upon the city where you are ! O then how zealously would you all concur to promote the interest of holiness in the land, and studiously encourage the servants of the Lord ! How severely would you deal with those, that by making a mock of godliness, do hinder the salvation of the people's souls ? How carefully would you help the laborers that are sent to guide men in the holy path ! and yourselves would go before the nation as an example of penitent self loathing for your sins, and hearty conversion to the Lord ! Is this your duty now ? or is it not ? If you cannot deny it, I warn you from the Lord do not neglect it : and do not by your disobedience to a convinced conscience prepare for tormenting conscience. If you know your Master's will, and do it not, you shall be beaten with many stripes.

And your public capacity and work doth make your repentance and holiness needful to others as well as to yourselves. Had we none to govern us, but such as entirely subject themselves to the government of Christ ; and none to make us laws, but such as have his law transcribed upon their hearts, O what a happy people should we be ! Men are unlikely to make strict laws against the vices which the love and live in ; or if they make them, they are more unlikely to execute them. We can expect no great help against drunkenness,

swearing, gaming, filthiness, and profaneness, from men that love these abominations so well, as that they will rather part with God and their salvation than they will let them go. All men are born with a serpentine malice and enmity against the seed of Christ, which is rooted in their very natures. Custom in sin increaseth this to malignity ; and it is only renewed grace that doth overcome it. If, therefore, there should be any among our rulers that are not cured of this mortal malady, what friendship can be expected from them to the cause and servants of the Lord ? If you are all the children of God yourselves, and heaven be your end, and holiness your delight and business, it will then be your principal care to encourage it, and help the people to the happiness that you have found yourselves. But if in any the original (increased) enmity to God and godliness prevail, we can expect no better (ordinarily) from such, than that they oppose the holiness which they hate, and do their worst to make us miserable. But wo to him that striveth against his Maker. Shall the thorns and briars be set in battle against the consuming fire and prevail ? (Isaiah xxvii. 4.) Oh ! therefore, for the nation's sake, begin at home, and cast away the sins which you would have the nation cast away ! All men can say, that ministers must teach by their lives, as well as by their doctrines ; (and wo to them that do not !) and must not magistrates as well govern by their lives, as by their laws ? Will you make laws which you would not have men obey ? Or would you have the people to be better than yourselves ? Or can you expect to be obeyed by others, when you will not obey the God of heaven and earth yourselves ? We beseech you, therefore, for the sake of a poor distressed land, let our recovery begin with you. God looks so much at the rulers of a nation in his dealings with them, that ordinarily it goes with the people as their rulers are. Until David had numbered the people, God would not let out his wrath upon them, though it was they that were the great offenders. If we see our representative body begin in loathing themselves for all their iniquities and turning to the Lord with all their hearts, we should yet believe that he is returning to us, and will do us good after all our provocations. Truly, gentlemen, it is much from you that we must fetch our comfortable or sad prognostics of the life or death of this diseas-



ed land. Whatever you do, I know that it shall go well with the righteous; but for the happiness or misery of the nation in general it is you that are our best prognostication. If you repent yourselves, and become a holy people to the Lord, it promiseth us deliverance; but if you harden your hearts, and prove despisers of God and holiness, it is like to be our temporal, and sure to be your eternal undoing, if saving grace do not prevent it.

And I must needs tell you, that if you be not brought to loathe yourselves, it is not because there is no loathsome matter in you. Did you see your inside you could not forbear it. As I think it would somewhat abate the pride of the most curious gallants, if they did but see what a heap of phlegm, and filth, and dung, (and perhaps crawling worms,) there is within them; much more should it make you loathe yourselves if you saw those sins that are a thousand times more odious. And to instigate you hereunto, let me further reason with you.

1. You can easily loathe an enemy; and who hath been a greater enemy to any of you than yourselves? Another may injure you; but no man can everlastingly undo you, but yourselves.

2. You abhor him that kills your dearest friends; and it is you by your sins that have put to death the Lord of life.

3. Who is it but yourselves that have robbed you of so much precious time, and so much precious fruit of ordinances, and of all the mercies of the Lord?

4. Who is it but yourselves that hath brought you under God's displeasure? Poverty could not have made him loathe you, nor any thing beside your sins.

5. Who wounded conscience, and hath raised all your doubts and fears? Was it not your sinful selves?

6. Who is it but yourselves that hath brought you so near the gulf of misery, and endangered your eternal peace?

7. Consider the loathsome nature of your sins, and how then can you choose but loathe yourselves?

1. It is the creature's rebellion or disobedience against the Absolute Universal Sovereign.

2. It is the deformity of God's noblest creature here on earth, and the abusing of the most noble faculties.

3. It is a stain so deep that nothing can wash out but the blood of Christ. The flood that drowned a world of sinners did not wash away their sins. The fire that consumed the Sodomites did not consume their sins. Hell itself can never end it, and, therefore, shall have no end itself. It dieth not with you when you die ; though churchyards are the guiltiest spots of ground, they do not bury and hide our sin.

4. The church must loathe it, and must cast out the sinner as loathsome, if he remain impenitent ; and none of the servants of the Lord must have any friendship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

5. God himself doth loathe the creature for sin, and for nothing else but sin, " My soul loathed them : " (Zech. xi. 8 ;) " When the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and daughters ; " (Deut. xxxii. 19 ;) " My soul shall abhor you ; " (Lev. xxvi. 30 ;) " When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel ; " (Psalm lxxviii. 59 ;) " He abhorred his very sanctuary ; " (Lam. ii. 7 ;) " For he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. " (Hab. i. 13.) In a word, it is the sentence of God himself, that a " wicked man is loathsome and cometh to shame, " Prov. xiii. 5,) so that you see what abundant cause of self-abhorrence is among us.

But we are much afraid of God's departure, when we see how common self-love is in the world, and how rare this penitent self-loathing is.

1. Do they loathe themselves that on every occasion are contending for their honor, and exalting themselves, and venturing their very souls, to be highest in the world for a little while ?

2. Do they loathe themselves that are readier to justify all their sins, or at least to extenuate them, than humbly confess them ?

3. Do they loathe themselves for all their sins that cannot endure to be reproved, but loathe their friends and the ministers of Christ that tell them of their loathsomeness ?

4. Do they loathe themselves that take their pride itself for manhood, and christian humility for baseness, and brokenness of heart for whining hypocrisy or folly, and call them a company of priest-ridden fools that lament their sin, and ease their souls by free con-

fession? Is the ruffling bravery of this city, and the strange attire, the haughty carriage, the feasting, idleness, and pomp, the marks of such as loathe themselves for all their abominations? Why then was fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, the badge of such in ancient times?

5. Do they loathe themselves for all their sins, who loathe those that will not do as they, and speak reproachfully of such as run not with them to the same excess of riot, (1 Peter iv. 4,) and count them precisians that dare not spit in the face of Christ, by wilful sinning as venturously and madly as themselves?

6. Or do they loathe themselves for all their sins, that love their sins even better than their God, and will not by all the obtestations, and commands, and entreaties of the Lord, be persuaded to forsake them? How far all these are from this self-loathing, and how far that nation is from happiness, where the rulers or inhabitants are such, is easy to conjecture.

I should have minded you what sins of the land must be remembered, and loathed, if we would have peace and healing. But as the glass forbids me, so alas, as the sins of Sodom, they declare themselves. Though through the great mercy of the Lord, the body of this nation, and the sober part, have not been guilty of that covenant-breaking, perfidiousness, treason, sedition, disobedience, self-exalting, and turbulency, as some have been, and as ignorant foreigners through the calumnies of malicious adversaries may possibly believe; yet must it be for a lamentation through all generations, that any of those who went out from us have contracted the guilt of such abominations, and occasioned the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme; and that any in the pride or simplicity of their hearts have followed the conduct of jesuitical seducers, they knew not whither or to what.

That profaneness aboundeth on the other side, and drunkenness, swearing, fornication, lasciviousness, idleness, pride, and covetousness, doth still survive the ministers that have wasted themselves against them, and the labors of faithful magistrates to this day! And that the two extremes of heresy and profaneness do increase each other; and while they talk against each other, they harden one another, and both afflict the church of Christ. But especially wo to England for

that crying sin, *the scorning of a holy life*, if a wonder of mercy do not save us. That people, professing the christian religion, should scorn the diligent practice of that religion which themselves profess! That obedience to the God of heaven, that imitation of the example of our Savior, who came from heaven to teach us holiness, should not only be neglected, unreasonably and impiously neglected, but also by a transcendent impious madness should be made a matter of reproach! That the Holy Ghost, into whose name, as the Sanctifier, these men were themselves baptised, should not only be resisted, but his sanctifying work be made a scorn! That it should be made a matter of derision for a man to prefer his soul before his body, and heaven before earth, and God before a transitory world, and to use his reason in that for which it was principally given him, and not to be wilfully mad in a case where madness will undo him unto all eternity! Judge, as you are men, whether hell itself is like much to exceed such horrid wickedness! And whether it be not an astonishing wonder that ever a reasonable soul should be brought to such a height of abomination! That they that profess to believe the holy catholic Church, and the communion of saints, should deride the holiness of the church, and the saints, and their communion! That they that pray for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will, even as it is done in heaven, should make a mock at all this that they pray for! How much further, think you, is it possible for wicked souls to go on sinning? Is it not the God of heaven himself that they make a scorn of? Is not holiness his image? Did not he make the law that doth command it; professing that none shall see his face without it! (Heb. xii. 14.) O sinful nation! O people laden with iniquity! Repent, repent speedily, and with self-loathing; repent of this inhuman crime, lest God should take away your glory, and enter himself into judgment with you, and plead against you the scorn that you have cast upon the Creator, the Savior, the Sanctifier, to whom you were engaged in your baptismal vows! Lest when he plagueth and condemneth you, he say, "Why persecuted you me?" (Acts ix. 4.) "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." Read Prov. i. 20, to the end. When Israel

mocked the messengers of the Lord, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, his wrath arose against his people till there was no remedy ; (2 Chron. xxvi. 16 ;) and O that you who are the physicians of this diseased land would specially call them to repentance for this, and help them against it for the time to come !

Having called you first to remember your misdoings, and, secondly, to loathe yourselves in your own eyes for them, I must add a third, that you stop not here, but proceed to reformation, or else all the rest is but hypocrisy. And here it is that I most earnestly entreat this honorable assembly for their best assistance. O make not the forementioned sins your own, lest you hear from God, "*quod minus crimine, quam absolutione peccatum est.*" Though England hath been used to cry loud for liberty, let them not have liberty to abuse their Maker, and to damn their souls, if you can hinder it. "*Optimus est reipublicæ status, ubi nulla libertas deest, nisi licentia pereundi,*" as Nero was once told by his unsuccessful tutor. Use not men to a liberty of scorning the laws of God, lest you teach them to scorn yours ; for can you expect to be better used than God. And "*cui plus licet quam par est, plus vult quam licet.*" (Gell. l. 17., c. 14.) We have all seen the evils of liberty to be wanton in religion. Is it not worse to have liberty to deride religion ? If men shall have leave to go quietly to hell themselves, let them not have leave to mock poor souls from heaven. The suffering to the sound in faith is as nothing ; for what is the foaming rage of madmen to be regarded ? But that in England, God should be so provoked, and souls so hindered from the paths of life, that whoever will be converted and saved must be made a laughing stock, which carnal minds cannot endure ; this is the mischief which we deprecate.

The eyes of the nation, and of the christian world, are much upon you, some high in hopes, some deep in fears, some waiting in dubious expectations for the issue of your counsels. Great expectations, in deep necessities, should awake you to the greatest care and diligence. Though I would not, by omitting any necessary directions or admonitions to you invite the world to think that I speak to such as cannot endure to hear, and that so honorable an assembly doth call the ministers of Christ to do those works of their proper office, which yet

they will be offended, if they do, yet had I rather err in the defective part than by excess, and therefore shall not presume to be too particular. Only in general, in the name of Christ, and on the behalf of a trembling, yet hoping nation, I most earnestly beseech and warn you, that you own and promote the power and practice of Godliness in the land, and that as God, whose ministers you are, (Rom. xiii. 4,) is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, (Heb. xi. 6,) and hath made this a principal article of our faith, so you would imitate your absolute Lord, and honor them that fear the Lord, and encourage them that diligently seek him. And may I not freely tell you that God should have the precedency? And that you must first seek his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, and he will facilitate all the rest of your work. Surely no powers on earth should be offended, that the God from whom, and for whom, and through whom, they have what they have, is preferred before them, when they should own no interest but his, and what is subservient to it. I have long thought that pretences of a necessity of beginning with our own affairs, hath frustrated our hopes from many parliaments already; and I am sure that by delays, the enemies of our peace have got advantage to cross our ends, and attain their own. Our calamities begun in differences about religion, and still that is the wound that most needs closing. And if that were done, how easily, I dare confidently speak it, would the generality of sober, godly people, be agreed in things civil, and become the strength and glory of the sovereign, under God. And though, with grief and shame, we see this work so long undone, (may we hope that God hath reserved it to this season,) yet I have the confidence to profess, that, as the exalting of one party, by the ejection and persecuting of the rest, is the sinful way to your dishonor and our ruin, so the terms on which the differing parties most considerable among us may safely, easily, and suddenly unite, are very obvious, and our concord a very easy thing, if the prudent and moderate might be the guides, and selfish interests and passion did not set us at a further distance than our principles have done. And to show you the facility of such an agreement, were it not that such personal matters are much liable to misinterpretations, I should tell you, that the late reverend Primate of Ireland, consented, in less

than half an hour's debate, to five or six propositions which I offered him, as sufficient for the concord of the moderate Episcopal and Presbyterians, without forsaking the principles of their parties. O that the Lord would yet show so much mercy to a sinful nation, as to put it into your hearts to promote but the practice of those christian principles which we are all agreed in ! I hope there is no controversy among us whether God should be obeyed, and hell avoided, and heaven first sought, and Scripture be the rule and test of our religion, and sin abhorred and cast out. O that you would but further the practice of this with all your might ! We crave not of you any lordship or dominion, nor riches, nor interest in your temporal affairs ; we had rather see a law to exclude all ecclesiastics from all power of force. The God of heaven that will judge you and us will be a righteous judge betwixt us, whether we crave any thing unreasonable at your hands. These are the sum of our requests : 1. That holiness may be encouraged, and the overspreading profaneness of this nation effectually kept down. 2. That an able, diligent ministry may be encouraged, and not corrupted by temporal power. 3. That discipline may be seriously promoted, and ministers no more hindered by magistrates in the exercise of their office than physicians and schoolmasters are in theirs, seeing it is but a government like theirs, consisting in the liberty of conscionably managing the works of our own office, that we expect. Give us but leave to labor in Christ's vineyard with such encouragements as the necessity of obstinate souls requireth, and we will ask no more. You have less cause to restrain us from discipline than from preaching. For it is a more flesh displeasing work that we are hardlier brought to. I foretell you that you shut out me, and all that are of my mind, if you would force us to administer sacraments, without discipline, and without the conduct of our own discretion, to whom the magistrate appoints it, as if a physician must give no physic but by your prescript. The antidisziplinarian magistrate I could as resolutely suffer under as the superstitious, it being worse to cast out discipline, than to err in the circumstances of it. The question is not, whether bishops or no, but whether discipline or none ? And whether enough to use it ? 4. We earnestly request that scripture sufficiency, as the test of our re-

ligion and only universal law of Christ, may be maintained, and that nothing unnecessary may be imposed as necessary, nor the church's unity laid on that which will not bear it, nor ever did. O that we might but have leave to serve God only as Christ hath commanded us, and to go to heaven in the same way as the apostles did! These are our desires, and whether they are reasonable, God will judge.

Give first to God the things that are God's, and then give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. Let your wisdom be first pure, and then peaceable. Not but that we are resolved to be loyal to sovereignty, though you deny us all these. Whatever malicious men pretend, that is not, nor shall not, be our difference. I have proved more publicly, when it was more dangerous to publish it, that the generality of the orthodox, sober ministers, and godly people of this nation, did never consent to king-killing, and resisting sovereign power, nor the change of the ancient government of this land, but abhorred the pride and ambition that attempted it. I again repeat it, the blood of some, the imprisonment and displacing of others, the banishment or flight of others, and the detestations and public protestations of more; the oft-declared sense of England, and the wars and sad estate of Scotland, have all declared before the world, to the shame of calumniators, that the generality of the orthodox, sober protestants of these nations, have been true to their allegiance, and detesters of unfaithfulness and ambition in subjects, and resisters of heresy and schism in the church, and of anarchy and democratical confusions in the commonwealth. And though the land hath ringed with complaints and threatenings against myself, for publishing a little of the mixture of jesuitical and familistical contrivances, for taking down together our government and religion, and setting up new ones for the introduction of popery, infidelity, and heresy, yet I am assured that there is much more of this confederacy for the all-seeing God to discover in time, to the shame of papists, that cannot be content to write themselves for the killing of kings when the pope hath once excommunicated them, and by the decrees of a general council at the Lateran, to depose princes that will not extirpate such as the pope calls heretics, and absolve all their subjects from their fidelity and allegiance, but they must also creep into the councils and

armies of protestants, and taking the advantage of successes and ambition, withdraw men at once from their religion and allegiance, that they may cheat the world into a belief that treasons are the fruits of the protestant profession, when these masked jugglers have come by night, and sown and cherished these Romish tares. As a papist must cease to be a papist if he will be truly and fully loyal to his sovereign, (as I am ready to prove against any adversary,) so a protestant must so far cease to be a protestant, before he can be disloyal. For Rom. 13. is part of the rule of his religion. Unhappily there hath been a difference among us which is the higher power, when those that have their shares in the sovereignty are divided, but whether we should be subject to the higher power, is no question with us.

Gentlemen, I have nothing to ask of you for myself, nor any of my brethren, as for themselves, but that you will be friends to serious preaching and holy living, and will not ensnare our consciences with any unscriptural inventions of men. This I would beg of you as on my knees : 1. As for the sake of Christ, whose cause and people it is that I am pleading for. 2. For the sake of thousands of poor souls in this land, whose salvation or damnation will be much promoted by you. 3. For the sake of thousands of the dear servants of the Lord, whose eyes are waiting to see what God will do by your hands. 4. For your own sakes, who are undone if you dash yourselves on the rock you should build on, and set against the holy God and turn the cries of his servants to heaven for deliverance from you. (Luke xviii. 8.) If you stumble on Christ, he will break you in pieces ; but if he fall upon you, he will grind you to powder. 5. For the sake of your posterity, that they may not be bred up in ignorance or ungodliness. 6. For the honor of the nation and yourselves, that you turn by all the suspicions and fears that are raised in the land. 7. For the honor of sound doctrine and church-government, that you may not bring schism into greater credit than now you have brought it to deserve shame. For if you frown on godliness under pretence of uniformity in unnecessary things, and make times worse than when libertinism and schism so prevailed, the people will look back with groans, and say, 'What happy times did we once see !' And so will honor schism, and libertinism, and usurpation,

through your oppression. 8. Lastly, I beg this of you, for the honor of sovereignty, and the nation's peace. A prince of a holy people is most honorable. The interest of holiness is Christ's own. Happy is that prince that espouseth this, and subjecteth all his own unto it. (See Psalm i. 1, 2, and ci., and xv. 4.) It is the conscionable, prudent, godly people of the land, that must be the glory and strength of their lawful sovereign. Their prayers will serve him better than the hideous oaths and curses of the profane. Wo to the rulers that set themselves against the interest of Christ and holiness! (Read Psalm ii.;) or that make snares for their consciences, that they may persecute them as disobedients, who are desirous to obey their rulers in subordination to the Lord. (See Dan. iii., and vi. 5, 10, 13.) I have dealt plainly with you, and told you the very truth. If God have now a blessing for you and us, you will obey it, but if you refuse, then look to yourselves, and answer it if you can. I am sure, in spite of earth and hell, it shall go well with them that live by faith.

RIGHT REJOICING:
OR, THE
NATURE AND ORDER
OF
RATIONAL AND WARRANTABLE JOY;
DISCOVERED IN A
SERMON PREACHED AT ST. PAUL'S
BEFORE THE
LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN,
AND THE SEVERAL COMPANIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

On May 10th, 1660,

APPOINTED BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT TO BE A DAY OF SOLEMN
THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S RAISING UP AND SUCCEEDING HIS
EXCELLENCY, AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS,

IN ORDER TO

HIS MAJESTY'S RESTORATION,

AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THESE NATIONS.



TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE THOMAS ALLEYNE,
LORD MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LONDON,
WITH THE
RIGHT WORSHIPFUL ALDERMEN,
HIS BRETHREN.

As, in obedience to your favorable invitation, this Sermon was first preached ; and the Author, conscious of his great unworthiness, employed in so honorable a work ; so it is your pleasure, against which my judgment must not here contest, that hath thus exposed it to the public view ; which yet I must confess doth not engage you in the patronage of any of the crudities and imperfections of this hasty work, it being the matter, which is of God, that so far prevailed for your acceptance as to procure your pardon of the manner, which is too much my own. Rejoicing is so highly valued, even by nature, that I thought it a matter of great necessity to help to rectify and elevate your joys. The corruption of a thing so excellent must needs be very bad ; and it being the great and durable good that must feed all great and durable joy ; and seeing these little transitory things can cause but little and transitory delight, I thought it my duty to insist most on the greatest on which, in your meditations, you must most insist ; which I repent not of, especially now you have given my doctrine a more loud and lasting voice, because it is only our heavenly interest that may be the matter of universal continued delight : and so the subject may make the sermon to be of the more universal and continued use, when a subject of less excellency and duration than heaven would have depressed and limited the discourse, as to its usefulness. And also I was forced in this, as in all these sub-

lunary things to estimate the mercy in which we did all so solemnly rejoice but as a means, which is so far to be valued as it conduceth to its end ; and is something or nothing as it relateth to eternity. Since I placed my hopes above, and learned to live a life of faith, I never desire to know any mercy in any other form or name, nor value it on any other account, as not affecting to make such reckonings which I daily see obliterated in grief and shame by those that make them ; and remembering who said, that if we had known Christ himself after the flesh, henceforth we know him so no more. As it was my compassion to the frantic merry world, and also to the self-troubling melancholy Christian, and my desire methodically to help you in your rejoicings about the great occasions of the day, which formed this exhortation to what you heard, and chose the subject which, to some, might seem less suitable to the day ; so, if the publication may print so great and necessary a point on the hearts of any that had not the opportunity to hear, as God shall have the praise, and they the joy, so you shall have, under God, the thanks, and I the attainment of my end, which is my reward : I rest,

Your servant in the work of Christ,

RICHARD BAXTER.



RIGHT REJOICING.

LUKE x. 20.

Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject to you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

Right Honorable, Worshipful, and Beloved Auditors,

IF any of you shall say, upon the hearing of my text, that I have chosen a subject unsuitable to the occasion, and that a "rejoice not" is out of season on a day of such rejoicing, they may, I hope, be well satisfied by that time they have considered the reason of these words, as used by Christ to his disciples, and the greater joy that is here commanded, and so the reason of my choice.

When Christ had sent forth his seventy disciples to preach the gospel through the cities of Judea, and to confirm it by miraculous cures, for which he endued them with power from above, upon their return they triumph especially in this, that "the devils themselves were subject to them through the name of Christ." (Ver. 17.) A mercy which Christ is so far from extenuating that, 1. He sets it forth more fully than they, (ver. 18,) "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." 2. He promised them yet more of it, "giving them power to tread on serpents, and on scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and that nothing should by any means hurt them." 3. He rejoiceth in spirit, and thankfully acknowledged it to the father himself. (Ver. 21.) And yet he seems here to forbid them to rejoice in it, commanding them another joy. What! was it not a mercy to be rejoiced in? Or is there any contradiction in the words of Christ? Neither: he doth not absolutely forbid them to rejoice in it; but he saw that their corruption took an advantage by it, to puff them up with pride and vain glory, and that they savored it too carnally, and were much taken with it, as it was a visible triumph and honor to themselves the instruments, and too much over-

looked the end and use of it. Christ therefore aggravateth the mercy in its proper notion, as it was to the honoring of the Father and himself, and the advancement of his kingdom, and the saving of men's souls, by the confirmation of the gospel, and the fall of Satan. But the shell or grosser substance of the mercy applied to a wrong end, and by corruption made another thing, being deprived of its proper soul, this Christ admonisheth them to keep out of their estimation and affection. He meeteth his returning messengers rejoicing too much in themselves: and this proud, inordinate, selfish joy is it that he would take from them by his caution or prohibition, "In this rejoice not." But that they may see that he doth not envy them their comforts, he sheweth them cause of a greater joy, which he alloweth and commandeth them, as more suitable to his ends and their felicity: "But rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

For better understanding of this you may observe; 1. What matter of joy the subjection of the devils might afford them. 2. What manner of joy they were affected with, which Christ forbade them. 3. What manner of joy it is that Christ alloweth them, when he seemeth to restrain it wholly to their heavenly interest.

1. No doubt, to have the devils subject to them was a great mercy, in which they might rejoice. For, 1. It was the gift of Christ: and all is perfumed that hath touched his hand. Nothing but good can come from him that is so good, by way of gift.

2. It was a gift foretold by the prophets, as reserved for the gospel time, that is eminently called the kingdom of God: and an extraordinary gift in respect to the precedent and subsequent generations. It was no usual thing for men to exercise such authority over the very devils, as to command them to come forth, and to heal the bodies that they had long afflicted.

3. It was a victory over the strongest enemy, that can make more effectual resistance than the most numerous armies of poor mortals, and would laugh at your horse and arms, your fire and sword, your greatest cannons: and cannot be expugned but by the power of the Almighty. A stronger than he must come upon him, and bind him, and cast him out of his possession, before he will surrender the garrison, goods, and prisoners, which he hath held in peace, (Luke xi. 21, 22.)

4. It was a victory over the most subtle enemy, that is not conquerable by any stratagems of human wit.

5. It was a victory over the most malicious enemy, that sought more than the subversion of men's temporal peace, and by afflicting the body intended the hurting of the soul.

6. It was a conquest of him that had long possession, and one way or other kept in bondage the prisoners that justice had subjected to his rage.

7. It was a victory exceeding honorable to Christ, whose very messengers, by his name alone, could make the powers of hell submit. He that refused to be made a king, as having not a kingdom of this world, (John xviii. 36.) and that had not a place to lay his head on; (Matt. viii. 20;) commanded him that had presumed to tempt him with all the kingdoms and the glory of the world! (Matt. iv. 8, 9;) and that not only by the bare word of his mouth, but by the word of his meanest, most despised messengers; which made the people stand amazed, saying, what manner of man is this?

8. It was a victory tending to the successes of the gospel, to convince the unbelieving world, and so to enlarge the kingdom of Christ, and to save the people's souls.

9. And also from so great a work it was no small honor that accrued to the instruments: an honor which, in its proper place, they might lawfully regard.

10. And all this was aggravated by the congruency of the mercy to the low, despised condition of the instruments, (and of Christ himself,) when they were destitute of all common advantages and means, for the carrying on of so great and necessary a work, surpassing all the strength of flesh: how seasonable was it that the Omnipotency of heaven should then appear for them, and thus engage itself for their success. So that in all this you may easily see that here was abundant matter for a rational, warrantable joy to the disciples.

II. But where then was their fault? And what was that joy which Christ forbade them? *Answer.* Having already told you in general, I shall tell you more particularly. 1. They looked too much at the matter of dominion over the subjected and ejected devils and relish-

ed most delightfully the external part. As the Jews looked for a Messiah that should come in grandeur, and bring the nations under his dominion; so the disciples that had yet too much of these conceits began to be lifted up with the expectation of some earthly glory, when they saw the powers of hell submit, and Christ thus begin with the manifestation of his omnipotency. But the great end of these miracles they too much overlooked: they too much left out of their rejoicings the appearances of God, the advantages of faith, the promotion of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and the greater mercies of the gospel, as to themselves and others.

2. They took too great a share of honor to themselves, being more affected to see what great things they were made the instruments to accomplish, than what honor did thereby accrue to God and benefit to man; and thus, while they arrogate too much to themselves, and withal too much overlook those higher, greater mercies, to which all their miracles were but means, they deservedly fall under Christ's reproof; and he is employed in the cure of their diseased joys, by amputation of the superfluities, and rectifying the irregularities, and supplying the defects, lest Satan should take possession of their souls, by carnality, selfishness, and pride, when they thought they had conquered him, by dispossessing him of men's bodies.

III. By this you may understand what joy it is that Christ alloweth and commandeth them.

1. As to themselves, to kill their pride, and to increase their kindly joy and thankfulness, and to advance their estimation of the riches of the gospel, and rectify their judgment of the work and kingdom of their Lord, he calls them to mind that higher mercy, which is worthy of their greatest joy. An interest in heaven is another kind of mercy than healing the sick, or casting out devils here on earth.

2. In reference to his honor, he would have them first look at the greatest of his gifts, and not forget the glory which he finally intends them, while they are taken up with these wonders in the way; for his greatest honor ariseth from his greatest mercies.

3. As to the degrees of their rejoicing, he would not have them give the greater share to the lesser mercy, but to rejoice so much more in their heavenly interest, as that all other joy should be as

none in comparison of it : so that this "Rejoice not in this," &c. is as much as if he had said, 'Let your rejoicing in this power over the devils be as nothing in comparison of your rejoicing that your names are written in heaven.' Just as he forbiddeth care and labor for these earthly things, when he saith, "Care not what ye shall eat," &c.; (Matt. vi. 25;) "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you." (John vi. 27.) Our care and labor for earthly things must be nothing, in comparison of the care and labor we are at for heaven : and so our joy, in the greatest of these outward mercies, should be as nothing, in comparison of our joy in higher things.

4. As to the nature and order of the thing, he alloweth them no joy in this, or any temporal or created thing whatsoever, but as it proceedeth from God, and tendeth to him as our ultimate end. We must not rejoice in our victories over Satan, or any other enemy, for itself, and as our end, but as it is a means to the glory of God and men's salvation. In all which, it is evident that Christ doth but regulate and advance their joy, and calleth them first to rejoice in that which is their end and all, and animateth all their lower mercies ; he then alloweth and requireth them to rejoice, even in this, which he seemed to forbid them to rejoice in, viz., that the devils were subject to them, so they do it in due subordination to its end.

The only difficulty in the preceptive part of the text is, what is meant here by the "writing of their names in heaven." In a word, the meaning is, that they are "fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God;" and having a room among the saints on earth, have a title to the celestial glory. As in some well-ordered cities there were rolls kept of the names of all the citizens, or freemen, as distinct from all the inferior, more servile, sort of subjects ; and as muster-rolls are kept of the listed soldiers of the army, so all that are saints are enrolled citizens of heaven, that is, are the heirs of the heavenly felicity.

We are decreed to this state before the foundations of the world ; we are redeemed to it by the death of Christ ; but we are not actually entered into it till we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and heartily engaged to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the holy covenant.

The doctrine of the text is contained in this proposition—To have our names written in heaven is the greatest mercy, and first, and chiefly, and only for itself to be rejoiced in; which so puts the estimate on all inferior mercies, that further than they refer to this they are not to be the matter of our joy.

Though we had seen the devils subjected to our ministration, departing from the possessed when we command them in the name of Christ, and the bodies of the afflicted miraculously relieved; yet all this were not, comparatively, to be rejoiced in, nor as separated from our title to the heavenly glory.

When I have, first, given you the reasons of the prohibition—"Rejoice not in this," and then of the command—"But rather rejoice," &c. you may, by fuller satisfaction about the sense and truth of the proposition, be better prepared for the further application.

I. "Rejoice not," though the devils themselves were subject to you, further than as this refers to heaven; 1. because all these common mercies may possibly consist with the present misery of the persons that receive them. A man may be the slave of the devil, as to his soul, when he is casting him out of another man's body. He may be conquered by his own concupiscence, that hath triumphed over many an enemy. These times have showed it, to our grief, that heresy, and pride, and ambition, and self-conceit, may conquer those that have been famous for their conquests. He may be a slave to himself that is the master of another.

And what I say of the instance in my text, you may, upon a parity or superiority of reason, all along give me leave to apply to the great occasion of the day, it being a matter of much greater glory to conquer infernal powers than mortal enemies, and to have the devils subject to us than men. To be such a conqueror of men or devils is no sure proof of the pardon of sin, the favor of God, and saving of your souls. Alas! how many, called valiant, are the basest cowards in the warfare that their everlasting life dependeth on? How many that are renowned for their victories by men, are wretches despised and abhorred by the Lord? What Christian so poor and despicable in the world that would change his state with a Catiline or Sejanus, yea, with a Cæsar or Alexander, if he might? Could you

see the inside of a glittering gallant, or an adored prince, that is a stranger to the life of faith, what a sad disparity would you see? The vermin of the most filthy lusts continually crawling in the soul, while the body is set out by the most exquisite ornaments that pride can invent, and their purses can procure, for the increasing of their esteem in the eyes of such as judge of souls by the color and cover of the bodies. To see the same man sumptuously feasted, attended, honored, magnified by men, and at the same time dead in sin, unacquainted with the life and comforts of believers, and under the curse and condemnation of the law of God, would tell you that such a wretch is far from the state in which a reasonable man is allowed to rejoice. There are not more naked leprous souls in the world, than some that are covered with a silken, laced, painted case : nor any more poor and sordid, than such as abound with earthly riches. And for such a one to rejoice is as unseemly as for a man to glory that his gangrened foot hath a handsome shoe : or that his diseased, pained flesh doth suffer in the fashion ; or that his wounds and ulcers are searched with a silver instrument. God seeth the rottenness and filth that is within these painted sepulchres, and therefore judgeth not of them as the ignorant spectator, that seeth no further than the smoothed, polished, gilded outside. And therefore we find his language of such to differ so much from the language of the world. He calls those poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and foolish, and mad, and dead, and cursed, that perhaps hear nothing lower from the world than honorable, worshipful, rich, and wise ; and men are admiring them, while God is loathing them : and men are applauding them, while God condemneth them. And hence it is that the servants of the Lord do lament the case of those that worldlings count most happy. What Paul speaks of those "whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things," he doth it weeping ; (Phil. iii. 18, 19 ;) when a frantic sensualist would have derided his compassionate tears, and bid him keep them for himself.

2. Rejoice not in these outward common things comparatively, or for themselves, because they are not only consistent with most deplorable misery, but also are the strong and ordinary means of making men miserable, and fixing them in it, and increasing it. Many

that have seemed humble, fruitful, flourishing, and steadfast, while they dwelt in the vallies of a mean, a low, afflicted state, have proved sun-burnt, weather-beaten sinners, apostates, proud, vain glorious and barren, when they have removed their habitations to the mountains of prosperity. Alas! we find it hard enough to be serious, faithful Christians, under the less and ordinary temptations of a poor, or mean, or suffering condition. And I should rejoice if I were but to pass to heaven as a camel must pass through a needle's eye. We have difficulties enough already, unless our wisdom, strength, and courage, were greater to encounter them; and shall we rejoice if these difficulties be increased to impossibilities, (as with men,) leaving us no hope but that human impossibilities are conquerable by Divine Omnipotency. (Luke xviii. 27.) Is it not hard enough to have a lowly mind in a low condition; but much more in a high? To despise the world when the world despiseth us? To walk in heaven when faith is not interrupted by the noise or shows of the distracted actors of these bedlam tragedies? And to converse with our everlasting company when we are freest from these crowds and tumults? And shall we rejoice that we, who already stumble at straw, have rocks of offence and mountains of difficulty cast before us? How few are advanced to higher measures of faith and holiness by their advancements in the world? For the most part, if they seemed to have something of plain honesty and fidelity before, when they come to be advanced, it is drowned in carnal policies, self-love, and hypocritical dissimulation. And if they seemed before to be humble and heavenly, and to live to God, and to his interest and service, how strangely doth prosperity and dignity transform them, and make them forget their former apprehensions, their convictions, purposes, and vows, yea their God, their happiness, and themselves. And should we not be very cautelous how we rejoice in an air that few men have their health in? and in a diet how sweet soever, that corrupts and kills the most that use it? in the tables that prove snares, and the sumptuous houses that are traps to the inhabitants?

3. Rejoice not in these common, things, for they are but such as are often made the devils tools to do his work by, and are used against the Lord that gave them, to the hinderance of the gospel, and injury

of the church of Christ. While men are low, and live by faith, they do good with the little which they have ; and have the blessing of the will, (when they are unable for the deed,) and of hearts disposed to do good if they had opportunity ; when usually those that are lifted up, having more of power, and less of will, do less when they might and should do more ; and use their talents to aggravate their sin and condemnation : to further piety, or charity, they have power without will ; but to hinder it, they have both power and will. And while the poor of the world, that are rich only in faith, would help on the work of God, and cannot, (by the great assistances which the great might give,) and the rich and honorable can and will not, but can and will promote the interest of the flesh, you may easily see the case of the church, how sure it is to know adversity, and how much of our expectation must be from God, and how little from any of the sons of men. Is it as common for one that is very rich to part with all to follow Christ for the hopes of heaven, as it is for one that hath not much in the world, to part with ? Is it as common for one that hath many thousands a year, to cast all his substance into the treasury, as for a widow to do it that hath but two mites ? (Luke xxi. 2, 4.) O how much easier were it like to go with the church of God if greatness and ungodliness were not so commonly conjunct ! But usually, as riches, and dignities, and honors do much increase their carnal interest, so do they increase their carnal mindedness, and their engagements against that life of faith and holiness which is contrary to their interests ; so that none are such malignant adversaries to godliness, and none have such advantage to execute their malice. Seeing, then, that all such honors and advancements are made by corruption too ordinary instruments of the vilest works of serving Satan, and opposing Christ, and oppressing piety, honesty, and innocence, rejoice not in them as for themselves, nor any way but in subservience to your heavenly rejoicings.

4. And it should much abate our carnal joy to consider that all these things are such as may end in misery, and leave the owner in everlasting wo. He that is feasting in purple and fine linen to-day, may be to-morrow in remediless torments, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue. (Luke xvi.) He that is to-day triumphing over

mortal enemies, may to-morrow be led in triumph to hell-fire, and lie in chains of darkness till the judgment of the great day. He that is now prophesying in the name of Christ and casting out devils, and doing many great and wonderful works, may shortly be condemned at his bar with a "depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." (Matt. vii. 22, 23.) And who would be merry at a feast that he must cast up again, in griping pain, or mortal sickness? You see now where the great ones of the world do take their places, and how they are admired and honored by men; but you see not where the tide will leave them, and how they shall be used by infernal spirits if they had not a better preventive and security than all the renown and dignities of the world. Be cautelous, therefore in your rejoicing for that which may end in everlasting sorrows.

Yea, more than so, these outward honors and successes may plunge men deeper in perdition than ever they had been without them. And thousands shall wish that they had never known them; and that they had rather been the lowest and obscurest persons, than by the temptations of prosperity to have been led into that misery. And should you not be very cautelous in your rejoicing in that which you may possibly wish you had never known? You see then the reasons for the prohibition, "Rejoice not."

II. But, on the contrary, that the precept "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven," is backed with such reasons from the nature of the thing, as should much excite us to the practice, is a truth so manifest, that a tedious demonstration of it might seem at best unnecessary, and so an error, in these straits of time. 1. What should be rejoiced in, if not the Lord of life himself, who is the everlasting joy and glory of the saints? If felicity itself cannot make us happy, and life itself is insufficient to quicken us, and the sun itself cannot illuminate us, it is in vain to expect this light, this life, this happiness and joy from any other. From others we may have joy derivatively at the second hand, but only from God as the original and first cause. Other things may be means of the conveyance, but God is the matter of our joy. A creature may be his medicine, but he is our life and health itself. Comfort may be offered by others, but it is he that gives it. Others may direct us to it, but he effecteth it. If God

be not to be rejoiced in, the affection of joy is made in vain ; for he is goodness itself, and there is nothing lovely or delectable but what is in him. And what is heaven but the fruition of God ?

2. It is congruous that we now rejoice in that which we must everlastingly rejoice in. Heaven is the state of everlasting joy, and therefore, the foresight of it by faith is the only way to rational, solid comfort here. If you knew the place in which you should live but an hundred years in earthly pleasures, or the friend in whom you should as long have sweet delight, the foreknowledge of it would make that place and friend more delightful to you than any other. Mutable joys are the shame of man, and show his levity, or folly in choosing these things to comfort him that are insufficient to perform it. But if your heavenly interest be the matter of your joy, you may rejoice to-morrow as well as to-day, and the next day as well as to-morrow, and the next year as well as this. If prosperity be your joy, your joy must be short, for your worldly prosperity will be so. If victory and dignity ; and overtopping others, be your joy, it will be short ; for death is ready to leave the conqueror, the honorable, the prince, with the conquered, and the meanest subject. If the solemnity and feasting of such a day as this should be the greatest matter of your joy, the day will have a night, and the feast an end, and so will your joy. But if heaven be the matter of your joy, you may go on in your rejoicing, and every day may be your festival : for God is the same both yesterday, and to-day, and forever. You only have the day that hath no night, and the feast that hath no end, or intermission, unless as it is caused by your errors and misapprehensions. There can nothing fall out of so hurtful a nature as to turn your feast into gall and wormwood, for God will be still God, and Christ still your head, and heaven will be heaven, and nothing is of any considerable moment to put into the scales against your happiness. If once you have a God, a Christ, a heaven to rejoice in, you may rationally indulge a constant joy and may rationally rejoice in poverty, reproach, contempt, and calumny, in imprisonment, banishment, sickness, or in death, as a prosperous state : and you transgress the laws of reason if you do not.

3. Rejoice if your names are written in heaven; for this is a divine, a pure, a profitable, and a warrantable joy. When God and his ministers rebuke your mirth, it is not this holy mirth that they rebuke, but your dreaming mirth, or waking folly. As we beat down your presumption, but to set up your faith; and beat down men's deceitful hopes, to prepare them for the hopes that will not fail them, and not to bring them to despair; so do we call you from your frothy, foolish, childish mirth, that we may lead you to the highest joys. Here is joy that you need not be ashamed of; of which you can scarcely take too much; of which you need not to repent. Be as joyful and merry as you will, if this may but be the matter of your joy. The more you are thus joyful, the more acceptable to God. It is Satan, and not God, that is the enemy of this joy; that pleads against it, and fills a Christian's mind with groundless scruples, and doubts, and objections against it. O that our souls and our assemblies did more abound with this holy joy! And O that Christians understood the excellency and usefulness of it, and would set themselves more constantly to the promoting and maintaining of it in themselves! Whoever of you that is most joyful in the Lord, I dare persuade you to be more joyful yet; and so far should you be from checking yourselves for this holy joy, that the rest of your duties should intend it, and you should make it your work by the help of all God's ordinances and mercies to increase it. He is the best Christian that hath most love, and joy, and gratitude; and he that is best at this, is like to be best in the performance of his other duties, and in the conquest of remaining sins. But more of this in the application.

And now I am approaching to a closer application, I hope I may suppose that I have removed the objection that met me in the beginning, and that by this time you see that I am not unseasonably suppressing your warrantable joy; but, 1. Preventing that which is unwarrantable; and, 2. Showing you the higher joys, which must animate these, or they will be but dead, corrupted things. It is only the regulation and the exaltation of your joys that I am endeavoring; and, for the first, my text affordeth me so full instruction, that you may see this observation meeting you in the first perusal of the words.

That when the Lord hath vouchsafed us matter of rejoicing in his wonders of mercy, and our great successes, the best of us are too prone to take up a selfish, carnal joy, and have need of Christ's prohibition or caution, "rejoice not in this."

The soul is active, and will be doing; and there is nothing that it is more naturally inclined to than delight. Something or other, which may be suitable to it, and sufficient to answer its desires, it fain would be rejoicing in. And the spiritual part of all our mercies is pure and refined, and too subtle for the discerning of our carnal minds, and, therefore, is invisible to the dark, ungodly world; and, also, it is contrary to the interest of the flesh, and to the present bent of man's concupiscence: and therefore it is that spiritual mercies are not perceived, nor relished by the flesh; yea, that they are refused, as food by a sick stomach, with enmity and loathing, as if they were judgments or plagues, and not mercies; and hence it is that a carnal mind doth as unwillingly accept of any mercies of this sort, as if it were some heavy service that made God almost beholden to him to accept them. But the objects of sense, the matters of commodity, or honor, or sensual pleasure, are such as the worst of men are more eager after than any other; they are things that flesh itself doth savor, and can judge of, and is naturally, now, too much in love with. And, therefore, there being too much of this concupiscence yet within us, the best have need, as to be excited to the spiritual part of their rejoicing, so to be warned and called off from the carnal part. Our successes, and our other common mercies have all of them both a carnal and a spiritual part; somewhat that is suited to our bodies, and somewhat to our souls. And as we are all too prone to be sensible and regardful of our bodily affairs and interests, and too insensible and neglectful of the matters of our souls; so we can easily pick out so much of providences and mercies as gratify and accommodate our flesh; and there we would stop and know no more; as if we had no spiritual part to mind, nor the mercy of any spiritual part to be improved. To rejoice in mere prosperity and success may be done without grace, by pride, and sensuality, as easily as a drunkard can be merry with his cups, or any other sinner in his sin. Think it not needless, then, to hear this admonition, Take heed that you rejoice not carnally

in the carcass, or outside only of your mercies. As such an outside religion, consisting in the shell of duty, without God, who is the life and kernel, is not religion indeed, but an hypocritical, self-deceiving show; so you may turn a day of thanksgiving into a day of fleshly mirth, more sinful than a morris-dance or may-game, because of the aggravation of conjunct hypocrisy, if you set not a faithful guard upon your hearts.

For the rectifying, therefore, and elevating of your joys, I am first to tell you, that there is matter of far greater joy before you than all the successes or prosperity of the world: and if it be not, yet being freely offered you, your acceptance may quickly make it such. Eternal joy and glory is at hand, the door is open, the promise is sure, the way made plain, the helps are many, and safe, and powerful; you may have the conduct of Christ, and the company of thousands, (though the smaller number,) if you will go this way: there are passengers every day going on, and entering in; many that were here the last year, are this year in heaven; yea, many that were yesterday on earth, are in heaven to day. It is another kind of assembly and solemnity than this that they are now beholding, and you may behold. One strain of that celestial melody doth afford more ravishing sweetness and delight than all that ever earth could yield. If a day in God's courts here, be better than a thousand in common employments or delights, then, sure, a day in heaven is better than ten thousand. That is the court; and (except the church, which is a garden that hath some celestial plants, and is a seminary or nursery for heaven) this world is the dunghill. There all is spiritual, pure, and perfect; the soul, the service, and the joy; but here they are all so mixed with flesh, and, therefore, so imperfect and impure, that we are afraid of our very comforts, and are fain, upon the review, to sorrow over many of our joys. We come now, from cares and troubles to our feasts; and our wedding garments smell of the smoke; and a secret disquietness in the midst of our delights doth tell us, that the root of our troubles doth remain, and that yet we are not where we should be, and that this is not our resting place. We lay by our cares and sorrows on these days with our old clothes, to take them up again to morrow, and alas! they are our ordinary

week-day habits: and it were well if it were only so; but even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and in our sweetest joys we feel such imperfections as threateneth a relapse into our former troubles. But the face of God admitteth no such imperfections in the joy of the beholders; there we shall have joy without either feeling or fear of sorrow; and praises without any mixtures of complaint. Our sweetest love to the Lord of love will feel no bounds, and fear no end. O what unspeakable delights will fill that soul that now walks mournfully, and feedeth upon complaints and tears! How the glory of God will make that face to shine for ever, that now looks too dejectedly, and is darkened with griefs, and worn with fears, and daily wears a mourning visage! No trouble can enter into the heavenly Jerusalem: nor is there a mournful countenance in the presence of our King! Self-troubling was the fruit of sin and weakness, of ignorance, mistakes, and passion, and, therefore, is unknown in heaven, being pardoned and laid by with our flesh among the rest of our childish weaknesses and diseases. That poor, afflicted, wounded soul, that breathes in trouble as its daily air, and thinks it is made up of grief and fear, shall be turned into love and joy, and be unspeakably higher in those heavenly delights than ever it was low in sorrow. O blessed face of the most glorious God! O happy presence of our glorified head! O blessed beams of the eternal love, that will continually shine upon us! O blessed work! to behold, to love, to delight, and praise! O blessed company of holy angels, and perfect saints, so perfectly united, so exactly suited, to concord in those felicitating works! Where all these are what sorrow can there be? what relics of distress, or smallest scars of our ancient wounds? Had I but one such friend as the meanest angel in heaven to converse with, how easily could I spare the courts of princes, the popular concourse, the learned academics, and all that the world accounteth pleasure, to live in the sweet and secret converse of such a friend! How delightfully should I hear him discourse of the ravishing love of God, of the glory of his face, the person of our Redeemer, the continued union of the glorified human nature with the divine, and of the head, with all the glorified members, and his influences on his imperfect ones below; of the dignity, quality, and work of saints and angels, and of the man-

ner of their mutual converse. How gladly would I retire from the noise of laughter, the compliments of comic gallants, the clutter and vain-glory of a distracted world, or any of the more manly inferior delights, to walk with one such heavenly companion! O how the beams of his illuminated intellect would promote my desired illumination! and the flames of his love to the most glorious God would reach my heart! What life and heavenly sweetness there would be in all his speeches! That little of heaven that I have perceived on some of the servants of the Lord, that are conversant above in the life of faith, doth make them more amiable, and their converse much more delectable to me, than all the feastings, music, or merriments in the world. O then what a world of joy and glory will that be, where we shall not only converse with them that have seen the Lord, and are perfected in the beatifical vision and fruition, but also shall ourselves everlastingly behold him, and enjoy him in perfection! That world all true believers see; they see it by faith in the holy glass which the Spirit in the apostles and prophets hath set up: and they have the earnest and first-fruits of it in themselves, even that Spirit by which they are sealed hereunto. That world we are ready to take possession of; we are almost there; we are but taking our leave of the inhabitants and affairs of earth, and better putting on our heavenly robes, and we are presently there. A few nights more to stay on earth, a few words more to speak to the sons of men, a few more duties to perform, and a few more troublesome steps to pass, will be a small inconsiderable delay. This room will hold you now but an hour longer, and this world but a few hours more, but heaven will be the dwelling-place of saints to all eternity. These faces of flesh that we see to day, we shall see but a few times more, if any; but the face of God we shall see for ever. That glory no dismal times shall darken; that joy no sorrow shall interrupt, no sin shall forfeit, no enemy shall endanger or take from us, no changes shall ever dispossess us of. And should not a believer then rejoice that his name is written in heaven? and that every providence wheels him on, and whether the way be fair or foul it is thither that he is travelling? O sirs! if heaven be better than vanity and vexation; if endless joy be better than the laughter of a child that ends in crying; and if God be better

than a delusory world, you have then greater matters set before you to be the matter of your joy than prosperity and success, or any thing that flesh and blood delights in.

And this being so, I am next, in faithfulness to your souls, obliged to call you to inquire, whether the rejoicing of this day, and the rejoicing of your lives, do here begin? Is God the beginning and the end of all? O that the Lord would awaken you to perceive, in all your mirth, how nearly it concerneth you to know first whether your names are written in heaven; and whether your chiefest joy be fetched from thence.

Alas! sirs, it is a most pitiful sight to see men frisk about in jollity, with the marks of death and wrath upon them; and to see men so frantically merry in their sin, as to forget the misery that will so quickly mar their mirth; and to see men live as quietly and pleasantly as if all were well with them, when they have taken no successful care for their precious souls, nor made any considerable sure provision for their endless life! Poor sinner! the Lord who sent me on this message to thee, knows that I envy thee not thy mirth or pleasure, but only would have it better for thee, or have thee set thy mind on better. But let me so far interrupt thee in thy mirth, as to ask thee whether thou art sure of heaven? Or, at least, whether thou hast given diligence to make it sure? (2 Peter i. 10.) If this night thy soul be called away, canst thou truly say that thou art an heir of life, and hast laid up thy treasure there beforehand? If thou say that thou hopest well, and no man can do more, and thus dost desperately cast thy everlasting life upon a careless venture, I must tell thee first that assurance may be had. Would God bid us rejoice that our names are written in heaven, if it were a thing that could not by any means be known? Would he bid us give diligence to make our calling and election sure, if it were a thing that could not by any diligence be attained? And I must add that presumption is no sign of a safe condition. It shall not go well with you because you imagine it shall go well. A man in a dropsy or consumption will not live by saying he hopes he shall not die. Yea, more, I must add, that a careless venturousness is a mark of misery. For a man that valueth God and his salvation, cannot put off a matter of such eternal con-

sequence so slightly and disregardingly. And a fear and care about your salvation would be a far better sign. For the most part they are safest that fear their danger, and they are in the saddest case that are never sad at the consideration of their case. It is not your bold and confident conceits that will open heaven to you, and therefore, I beseech you, presently look out for surer grounds of peace than these.

If you say how can it be known to me whether my name be written in heaven or not? I shall briefly, but satisfactorily, answer it.

In general, if thou know that thou art one that God hath promised heaven to, thou mayest know thy title, which is meant by the writing of thy name in heaven, and thou mayest know that this promise shall be made good.

More particularly, 1. If thou hast had such an effectual sight of the vanity of earth, and of the heavenly felicity, that heaven hath the pre-eminence in thy practical estimation and choice, and thou hast resolved that heaven or nothing shall be thy happiness, and art so far at a point with all things under the sun, as that thou art resolved to stick closer to Christ than unto them, and, whatever it cost thee, to take the fruition of God forever as thy portion; if, upon consideration of the difference between heaven and earth, God and the creatures, eternity and time, thou hast heartily devoted thyself to God, and art willing to be his servant upon the terms that he inviteth thee on, thou mayest be assured that thy name is written in heaven. (Matt. vi. 19, 21, and xvi. 24—26, and xiii. 45, 46; Luke xviii. 33.)

But if earth be the place of thy highest estimation and choice, where thou placest thy chief affections, and which thou adherest to more resolutely than to God, and which thou wilt not leave whatever thou lose by it, then, as earth hath thy heart, so earth is thy treasure, and thy name is not written in heaven, but in the dust.

2. If the obtaining of heaven be the principal part of thy care and business, the principal work which thou mindest in the world, it is certain that thy name is written in heaven: (Col. iii. 1—4 :) otherwise not.

3. If, finding thyself lost and filthy in thy sin, thou see the necessity and sufficiency of Christ, and, being desirous of his grace and

righteousness, dost unfeignedly take him for thy Savior and Lord, and give up thyself to be healed, and justified, and saved by him; as the only physician of souls, thou art then his member, and thy name is written in heaven. (John i. 12, and iii. 16, 18.)

4. If the heavenly nature be most amiable in thine eyes, and the heavenly life be it that thou most desirest; if thou hadst rather be holy than be unholy, and hadst rather perfectly obey the Lord, than live in sin, and longest to be better, and studiest to live in obedience to the Lord, thy name is in heaven, and thither thou art passing, and it will be thy reward. But if thou love not holiness, but hadst rather be excused from it, and live in thy sins, thou art as yet no heir of heaven. (John iii. 19; and xii. 26; Psalm i. and cxix.)

5. If thy name be written in heaven, thou hast a special love to the heirs of heaven. And the more of heaven thou findest in their hearts and lives, the more amiable they are unto thee, and the sweeter is their converse. (1 John iii. 14; Psalm xv. 4.)

I shall name no more. These evidences are sure. By these you may know, while you sit here in these seats, yea, if you lay in the darkest dungeon, that you are the heirs of heaven, and your names are there.

But where there is no such work, no high estimation of heaven, and resolution for it, no mortification or conquest of the world, no prevalent care and diligence for heaven, no resignation of the soul to Christ, that by faith and holiness we might follow him to that glory, no love to holiness, and no delight in the heirs of heaven, such persons are yet aliens to the heavenly nature and inheritance, and cannot rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

And now I have set the glass before you, I earnestly entreat you that you will here seriously view the complexion of your souls. It more nearly concerneth you to know whether your names are written in heaven, and where it is that you must dwell for ever, than to know how to manage your trades and business, or to know whether you shall stir from this place alive, or ever see another day. O sirs, take heed of living in self-deceit till your trying and recovering time is past! This is it that your enemy aims at; he will do all that malice and subtlety can do to keep such matters from your sober thoughts,

or to make you groundlessly presume that you are safe, or securely to cast your souls upon a desperate venture, under pretence of trusting in Christ, till he hath you where he would have you, and then he will himself take off the veil, and let you know that you had time and light to have acquainted you with your disease and misery, while you might have had a free, and sure, and full remedy. Then you shall know that it was long of your self-deceit if you would not understand and believe in time, that if you lived after the flesh, you should die, (Rom. viii. 13,) and that it is the pure in heart that shall see God. (Matt. v. 8.) Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience. (Ephes. v. 5, 6.) And can any thing justify the rejoicing of men in so sad a state?

Give me leave, therefore, to make a little closer application of the several parts of my text to the several sorts of persons whom they do concern. And first to all that yet are not become the heirs of heaven: Rejoice not though devils were subject to you, till your souls are subject to him that bought them. Rejoice not though you had conquered all the world, and had your wills of all your adversaries, as long as you are conquered by your fleshly lusts, and Satan leads you captive at his will. (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26.) Rejoice not though you had all the riches of the earth, as long as you are void of the riches of grace, and have nothing to do with the riches of glory. Rejoice not though all men should honor you, and bow to you, and proclaim your fame, as long as you are the drudges of the devil and the flesh, and the God of heaven proclaimeth you his enemies, and resolveth on your destruction, if you do not soundly and seasonably repent. (Luke xix. 27, and xiii. 3, 5.)

Be not offended with me, that, on a day of thanksgiving, I thus far forbid you to rejoice, for it is not you that are qualified for it, or have any part or fellowship in this business, being in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of your iniquity, your hearts being not right in the sight of God. Though the invitation be general, it supposeth that you come prepared, and therefore even he that calls men to his joys, will find out him that hath not on the wedding garment, "and will bind him, and cast him into outer darkness, where shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxii. 12, 13.) 1. Alas! sirs, if God would allow you to rejoice, how willingly could I allow it you. But hear whether he approve it. (Jam. v. 1, 3.) "Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming on you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." (Luke vi. 24—26.) "Wo unto you that are rich, (if you have no better riches,) for ye have received your consolation. Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you," &c. You may find your lesson, Joel ii. 12, 13, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart." You see what God calls such men to. And if he allow you not to rejoice till you are converted, if I or any man should flatter or cheat you into joy, it would be but a curse to you, and not a benefit.

2. Were your joy but reasonable, I would not discourage it. But a madman's laughter is no very lovely spectacle to yourselves. And I appeal to all the reason in the world, whether it be reasonable for a man to live in mirth that is yet unregenerate, and under the curse and wrath of God, and can never say, in the midst of his greatest pomp or pleasure, that he is sure to be an hour out of hell, and may be sure he shall be there for ever, if he die before he have a new, a holy, and a heavenly nature, though he should die with laughter in his face, or with a jest in his mouth, or in the boldest presumption that he shall be saved, yet, as sure as the word of God is true, he

will find himself everlastingly undone, as soon as ever his soul is departed from his body, and he sees the things that he would not believe. Sirs, is it rational to dance in Satan's fetters, at the brink of hell, when so many hundred diseases are all ready to mar the mirth, and snatch away the guilty soul, and cast it into endless desperation? I exceedingly pity the godly in their unwarrantable, melancholy griefs; and much more an ungodly man that is bleeding under his wounds of conscience. But a man that is merry in the depth of misery, is more to be pitied than he. Methinks it is one of the most pitiful sights in all the world to see a man ruffle it out in bravery, and spend his precious time in pleasures, and melt into sensual, foolish mirth, that is a stranger to God, and within a step of endless wo! When I see their pomp, and feasting, and attendance, and hear their laughter, and insipid jests, and fiddlers at their doors or tables, and all things carried as if they had made sure of heaven, it saddeneth my heart to think, alas! how little do these sinners know the state that they are in, the God that now beholdeth them, the change that they are near! How little do they think of the flames that they are hastening to, and the outcries and lamentations that will next ensue.

3. Your mirth is disingenuous and dishonest as long as you are without a title to heaven. You slight the Lord that can find such matters of rejoicing, when you have not his favor to rejoice in, and are under his displeasure. While you are refusing Christ, abusing grace, resisting the Spirit, serving the flesh, and undoing your own souls, it cannot be an honest or ingenuous thing for such as you to live in joy.

4. If your mirth were truly honorable to you, it were the more excusable. But to laugh in sin and misery, and make merry so near the endless wo, is a greater shame to your understandings, than to make sport to set your house on fire. This is the laughter of which Solomon might well say, "Thou art mad," and the mirth of which he saith, "What doth it." (Eccl. ii. 2.)

5. Would thy mirth do thee any good, we would not discourage it, yea, if it did not do thee harm. But O how many are now in sorrow by the means of their unseasonable, sinful mirth! They are too jocund to hear the preacher, or their consciences, or to observe the checks and motions of God's Spirit or to spend now and then an

hour in retired, sober thoughts of their everlasting state. Should we but presume to call them to exercise their reason, and mind them of these most needful things, and tell them, "O poor distracted mortals, your time is given you for greater things than to fiddle and dance, and drink and jest, and prate, and, compliment it away!" should we not be thought morose, or melancholy, or fanatics? And should we not have some such answer as their ancestors in Sodom gave to Lot? (Gen. xix. 9.) "Stand back. This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee than with them;" we will take a course with these controllers. Alas! it is this foolish mirth that casteth men's reason and conscience asleep, and drowns the voice of sober words, so that God himself cannot be heard. Could we but get men to retired soberness and seriousness, we should hope that we might find a friend within them, and that we speak to men, and that reason would take part with the most reasonable motions that are made to them from the Lord.

6. Lastly. Would your groundless mirth endure, we would not say so much against it. But, alas! to be merry for a day, and then to lie in misery for ever, is a thing deserving no encouragement. We see it is a merry world with many that have least cause of mirth; but how long will they continue it? To see a man laugh, and play, and feast, in a chariot that drives on so fast to death, in a vessel that is on so swift a stream that ends in the gulf of endless horror, is a doleful sight. O how quickly will that merry countenance turn sad! those proud looks be turned to an earthy paleness; and those wanton eyes be mouldered to dust, and leave the empty holes to warn the next spectators to use his eyes more wisely while he hath them? How quickly will these same sensual persons exchange their mirth for sighs, and groans, and endless torments, and fruitless lamentations, when they shall have everlasting leisure to peruse their lives, and to consider their ways, which now there is no persuading them to consider of? Who can encourage such hurtful and unseasonable mirth as this? "Rejoice not O Israel, for joy, as other people, for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God." (Hos. ix. 1.) "Rejoice not in a thing of nought," (Amos vi. 13,) much less in the sufferings of your brethren; (Obad. 12,) and least of all, in any hurt that befalls the church. If enmity

to holiness, and exalted impiety, should take occasion to triumph, we answer, as Micah, vii. 8, 9, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise: when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me; I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness."

If you think I have stood too long on the first part of my text, it is not to rebuke your holy joy, but only to promote it, and repress that carnal joy which is more destructive to it than sorrow itself. As you must "seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and then other things shall be added to you," (Matt. vi. 33;) so must you rejoice first in the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness that is the way thereto; and then you may add a moderate rejoicing in the things below, in a due subordination thereunto. You have the sum in the words of the Holy Ghost, "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord," &c. (Jer. ix. 23, 24.)

My next address must be to them whose names are written in heaven, and that with a twofold exhortation.

I. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." It is you, Christians, that joy of right belongs to. Little know the lovers of pleasure more than God, that they lose a thousand fold more pleasure than they win: and that by running from a holy life for pleasure, they run from the fire into the water for heat, and from the sun into a dungeon for light. O show the unbelieving world, by your rejoicing, how they are mistaken in their choice! Be ashamed that an empty sot, and one that must be for ever a firebrand in hell, should live a more joyful life than you! O do not so wrong your Lord, your faith, your endless joys, as to walk in heaviness, and cast away the joy of the Lord which is your strength, and to be still complaining, when those that are prepared for the slaughter are as frolic as if the bitterness of death were past. It is well that you have so much life as to feel your sicknesses; but it is not well, that because you are yet diseased, the

life of grace and of glory should be so ineffectual to your comfort. And yet, alas! how common is it to see the most miserable frisk and flee, while the heirs of life are sinfully vexing themselves with the inordinate fears of death. Lift up thy head, Christian, and remember whence came thy graces, even thy least desires, and whither do they tend. Where is thy Father and thy Head, and the most dear of thy companions? Where is it that thou must live to all eternity? Doth it beseem a companion of angels, a member of Christ, a child of God, an heir of heaven, to be grieved at every petty cross, and to lay by all the sense of his felicity, because some trifle of the world falls cross to his desires and commodity? Is it seemly for one that must be everlastingly as full of joy as the sun is full of light, to live in such a self-troubling, drooping state, as to disgrace religion, and frighten away the ungodly from the doors of grace, that, by your joyful lives, might be provoked to enter? I know, as to your happiness, the matter is not comparatively great; because if mistakes and the devil's malice should keep you sad here a hundred years, yet heaven will wipe away all tears, and those joys will be long enough when they come; and as the joy of the ungodly, so the sorrows of the humble, upright soul will be but for a moment; and though you weep and lament when the world rejoiceth, as their joy shall be turned into sorrow, so your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy shall no man take from you. But, in the mean time, is it not shame and pity that you should live so unanswerable to the mercies of the Lord? that you should sinfully grieve the comforting Spirit by the wilful grieving of yourselves, and that you should peevishly cast away your precious mercies, when you so much need them, by reason of the troubles of a vexatious world, which you cannot avoid? That you, even you, that are saved by the Lord, should still be questioning it, or unthankfully denying his great salvation, and so much hinder the salvation of others? For the Lord's sake, Christians, and for your souls' sake, and in pity to the ungodly, yield not to the tempter, that would trouble you when he cannot damn you? Is God your Father, and Christ your Saviour, and the Spirit your Sanctifier, and heaven your home? And will you make all, for the present, as nothing to you, by a causeless, obstinate denial? If you are in doubt, let

not mere passionate fears be heard; and let not the devil, the enemy of your peace, be heard: but peruse your evidences, and still remember, as the sum of all, that the will is the man, and what you would be that you are before the Lord. If you cannot see the sincerity of your hearts, go to your faithful, able guides, and open the case to them, and let not passion prevail against the Scripture and reason which they bring. Yea, if in your trouble you cannot by all their helps perceive the uprightness of your hearts, I must tell you, you may stay yourselves much upon their judgment of your state. Though it cannot give you full assurance, it may justly help to silence much of your self-accusations, and give you the comfort of probability. If a physician that feels not what you feel, shall yet, upon your speeches and other evidences, tell you that he is confident your disease is not mortal, nor containeth any cause of fear, you may rationally be much encouraged by his judgment, though it give you no certainty of life. As wicked men through contempt, so many godly people through melancholy, do lose much of the fruit of the office of the ministry, which lieth much in this assisting men to judge of the life or death of their souls. 'Alas!' say they, 'he feels not what I feel: he used to judge charitably, and he knoweth not me so well as I know myself.' But when you have told him faithfully, as you do your physician, what it is that you know by yourself, he is able to pass a far sounder judgment of your life or death than yourselves can do, for all your feeling: for he knows better what those symptoms signify, and what is used to be the issue of such a case as yours. Be not then so proud or wilful as to refuse the judgment of your faithful pastors, about the state of your souls, in a confidence on your own.

And look not for more, as necessary to your comforts, than God hath made necessary. Is it nothing to have a title to eternal life, unless you be also as holy as you desire? Yea, is it nothing to have a desire to be more holy? Will you have no comfort, as long as you have distractions, or dulness, or such like imperfection in duty; and till you have no disease of soul to trouble you, that is, till you have laid by flesh, and arrived at your perfect joy? Dare not to disobey the voice of God: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye

righteous ; and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart." (Psalm xxxii. 11.) " Rejoice evermore." 1 Thess. v. 16.) Let it be something that heaven cannot weigh down that shall suppress thy joy. Art thou in poverty, and is not heaven sufficient riches? Art thou in disgrace, and shalt thou not have honor enough in heaven? Art thou in danger from the injustice or the wrath of man, and is he not Almighty that hath undertaken to justify thee? (Rom. viii. 33, 34.) Dost thou languish under paining sicknesses, and is there not everlasting health in heaven? Art thou weak in knowledge, in memory, in grace, in duty ; troubled with uncommanded thoughts and passions ; and was it not so on earth with all who are now in heaven? O Christians ! make conscience of obeying this command ; " Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Did you but know how God approveth such rejoicing, and how much it pleaseth him above your pining sorrows ; and how it strengtheneth the soul, and sweeteneth duty, and easeth suffering, and honoreth religion, and encourageth others, and how suitable it is to gospel grace, and to your high relations and ends, and how much better it serves to subdue the very sins that trouble you, than your fruitless, self-weakening complainings do. I say, did you well consider all these things, it would sure revive your drooping spirits.

And do not say now, ' I would rejoice if I were sure that my name were written in heaven ; but I am not sure.' For, 1. Who is it long of that you are not sure? You may be sure that he that valueth and seeketh heaven as better than earth, and that loveth the holy way to heaven, and the most heavenly people, is indeed an heir of heaven ; and you may be sure, if you will, that this is your own case : and yet you say you are not sure that your names are written in heaven. If God give you his grace, and you deny it, will you therefore deny your right to glory, and make one sin the excuse for another?

2. And if you are not sure, is it nothing to have your probabilities, and hopes, and the judgment of your able, faithful pastors, that your souls are in a safe condition? We dare not say so to the careless world, nor to the most of men, as we do to you.

Especially take heed lest melancholy habituate you to fears and griefs ; and then religion must bear the blame, and you undergo a

calamitous life, though you are the heirs of heaven. To this end, 1. Use not musing, serious thoughts beyond the strength of your brain and intellect. 2. Place not too much of your religion in the perusal and study of your hearts; but (for such as are inclined to melancholy) it is the fruitfulest way to be much in expending duties abroad, and laboring to do good to others. Such duties have less of self, and have much of God, and divert the troubling, melancholy thoughts, and bring in more comfort by way of reward, than is usually got by more direct inquiry after comfort. 3. Use not too much solitariness and retiredness: man is a sociable creature; and as his duty lieth much with others, so his comfort lieth in the same way as his duty. 4. Take heed of worldly sorrows, and therefore of overvaluing worldly things. 5. Take heed of idleness, or of thinking that the duties of holiness are all that you have to mind; but make conscience of being diligent in a particular calling, which diverts the hurtful, troubling thoughts, and is pleasing unto God. 6. Take not every sickness of your souls for death, but rejoice in that life which enableth you to be troubled at your diseases. Keep under melancholy by these means, (and the advice of the physician,) and you will escape a very great hinderance to this high and holy duty of heavenly rejoicing.

II. But you think, perhaps, that I have all this while forgotten the duty proper to the day: No; but I was not fit to speak for it, nor you fit to hear and practise it, till the impediment of carnal rejoicing was removed, and till we had begun with heavenly joy. It is heaven that must animate all our comforts. They are so far sweet as heaven is in them, and no further. Now, therefore, if you first rejoice for your heavenly interest, I dare safely then persuade you to rejoice in the mercies which we are to be thankful for this day. And though some of them are but yet in the birth, if not in the womb, and we are yet uncertain what they will prove, that will not excuse us for any unthankfulness for the first conception or infancy of our mercies. And though Satan seek to get advantage by them, that will not excuse us for our overlooking the mercy in itself. And though there are yet abundance of fears and troubles on the hearts of many of Christ's servants through the land, we cannot by any

such accidents be excused from the thankful observation of the workings of the Lord. All mercies on earth, even spiritual mercies, have their mixtures of trouble, and their imperfections; but must not therefore be denied or extenuated. And though many that are dear to us, smarting by the change, will be offended and grieved at our most moderate thanksgiving, we must not therefore offend the Lord by our disregardfulness of his works.

There are these things to be commemorated by us this day, which I dare not overlook. 1. That God hath so honored his justice and impartiality, as to show how he hateth sin in whomsoever. And indeed the justice of God itself would seem more amiable to us, were we not so selfish as to think hardly of all that is hurtful unto us. Justice demonstrateth the holiness of God, and all the appearances of his holiness are lovely in themselves.

2. That the holy God hath disowned heresy and divisions on the one side, as well as impiety and profaneness on the other; and that his wisdom thought meet to acquaint us experimentally with the hurtfulness of both, and our danger of both, as he did in former ages of the church. We first found the serpentine malice of the ungodly, and God delivered us when they would have swallowed us up. But while we only heard and read of heresy and schism, and that too often abusively applied to many of the most peaceable servants of the Lord, we understood not the mischief of those evils, but were ready to take the very names to be but the reproaches of piety itself. But God saw meet to let out a flood of this sort of calamities, and to suffer heresy to disgrace itself by its unrighteous fruits, that by those fruits we might the better know it. We never knew before how much we are beholden to him for saving us from this sort of evils; and should never have sufficiently hated them, if we had not smarted by them.

3. It is a mercy to be thankful for, that thus the church is notably fortified against ever relapsing into heresy or schism for the time to come.

4. And that the frailties of men professing godliness having so lamentably appeared, they are taught to take heed of spiritual pride, and to know and distrust themselves, and not to be high-minded, but to fear.

5. It is a very great mercy, for which I must profess I was thankful from the first appearance of it,* that so many that I hope are dear to God, have the advantage of his frowns to further their conviction, and repentance, and salvation. As prosperity was the temptation by which ambition got advantage, and Providence misunderstood was pleaded against the holy rule, what a mercy it is that Providence also should undeceive them, and vindicate itself, and teach men hereafter by the example of this age to stay till the end before they take the sense of Providence, or rather to adhere to the holy word because the longest liver shall be too short-lived to see the end, so far as to furnish him for such an interpretation. And therefore that word that is the glass in which we can foresee the end must be our guide. I had rather have my friend poor and penitent, than wealthy and impenitent; and rather in a prison, than in the chains of pride. And am glad that God hath taken away the snare that brought so many souls to so sad a pass; and hath undeceived them in part, that had carnal thoughts of the happiness of saints, and looked for temporal reign and dignity; forgetting that rich men must pass through a needle's eye to heaven, and that lowliness, meekness, humility, patience, forbearing, forgiving, self-denial, contempt of this world, and living all upon things unseen, is the life that Christ by his doctrine and example taught us, and how ill prosperity befriendeth these. I am in far more hope to see many Peters go out and weep bitterly, than I was when they prospered in a sinful way. And if yet any be so far unhumbled, as to deny it to have been a sinful way, I am in far greater hope of their conviction now than heretofore. In their greatness few durst tell them of their crimes; and those of us that did it were voluminously reproached, threatened, calumniated, and represented as turbulent to the world. (It being usual with base-spirited men to take the judgment of the greatest for their rule, and to think all suffering to be just and honorable that is inflicted by such as few dare to contradict.) But now, I hope, plain dealing may re-

* We kept this thanksgiving voluntarily in Worcestershire, by agreement among the associated ministers, as we do here this day. See the agreement published by *The Weekly Mercury*.

cover many that before lived under flatteries, and were above reproof. I must profess that my hopes of the saving of many that are dear to me, by the furtherance of this providence, is matter of so much thankfulness to me, that were I sure to suffer with them I would yet give thanks.

6. It is matter of thanksgiving to me that God hath so far owned an unanimous, painful, faithful ministry, (for all their many sad infirmities,) as first to break the profane opposers of them, and then to scatter the adversaries on the other side. Ever since I heard it so familiar among them to call Christ's faithful servants by so many reproachful names, as priests, (in scorn,) presbyters, drivines, jack-presbyters, black-coats, pulpiteers, &c.; and their friends priest-ridden; to suffer quakers openly in the streets to revile them as deceivers, dogs, wolves, hirelings, false prophets, liars, and all the names that hell could teach them, I waited in fear for the judgments of the Lord; which he hath executed in our sight, and caused us to know, that his delays are no desertions of his servants, nor justification of our revilers. And let it stand as a warning to you that have seen it, and you that have executed the punishments of God upon the reproachers, that you take heed of falling into the same crime, and dashing on the rock on which they have been broken; but let all England hear and fear, and do no more so malignantly or presumptuously.

And O that the unworthy ministers of Christ may remember that we are not vindicated and delivered to contend, or to imitate our afflictors, in seeking greatness to ourselves, nor to live in idleness, and neglect the souls committed to our care.

7. It is very great cause of thankfulness in my eyes, that from first to last God hath been so tender of the honor of his unanimous sober people, and his cause, of the innocency and consciences of his servants; as to execute his afflictions mostly by the hands of erring men: and to keep the rest by imprisonments, seclusions, and other means, so far from all appearance of consent or irregularities: and that at last he hath put an opportunity into their hands to declare to the world their innocency in things with which they were reproached; and that while profane opposers of religion did boast and vapor,

and swear and curse, and drink healths for his Majesty's restitution, it is those whom they reproached that have silently and effectually accomplished it, and that with speed, as soon as they had power.

8. It is some matter of thankfulness to me, that whereas, to our perpetual shame we could not in so many years compose the disagreements in church affairs among us, we are not altogether without hope that agreement may be now more effectually procured; not only because those carnal advantages that hindered it with some are taken from them, and suffering will dispose some more to peace; but because we are persuaded the disposition, and we are sure the interest, of His Majesty standeth for our reconciliation and unity. And verily we are the most inexcusable people in the world, if our own long and sad experience do not resolve us to do the utmost in that work ourselves, which if we are not horribly proud and wilful, is easy to accomplish.

9. And it is matter of thanksgiving that God hath been all along so wonderfully seen in the work; which makes us hope that the issue will yet be for our good. The first sparks that set fire on the last foundation are yet much unknown, but were so little as makes it the more strange. The wonderful whirlwind that suddenly finished the subversion was marvellous, though sad, because of the wickedness of men. The introducing of the remnant of the members; the stop that was given them, when they had voted in a committee a liberty in religion, that excepted not popery; the casting them out by those that set them up; the discoveries of the fallaciousness of some of their chiefs, who were then tempted into a compliance with the army, and were fabricating a new form of a Commonwealth; the breaking of them and of the army, in part by the returning members; the unexpected stop that was given first to their proceedings by His Excellency in the North; the expeditiousness, the constancy, the unanimity and strange successfulness of that attempt, that an army who thought themselves only fit to be the nation's security for liberty and religion, and were thought necessary to be entailed upon us to that end; that were so heightened in their own and other men's esteem, by their many and wonderful successes, should in a moment (we scarce know how) fly all into pieces as a grenado that is fired; that Ireland

at the same time should be so strangely and easily reduced, and that by sober, faithful hands, and by so few, and with such speed ; that this famous city should be so unanimously excited to concur so eminently, and contribute very much to the success ; that His Excellency should conquer without any blows, and all be despatched that since is done with no considerable resistance ; all this, and much more, do make us wonder at the hand of God. And seldom is there so wonderful an appearance of the Lord, but it holds forth matter that is amiable as well as admirable to his church.

Lastly. That all this is done with little or no effusion at all of blood when so much blood was shed in the foregoing changes, advanceth the wonder to a greater height : and I hope His Majesty and the two Houses of Parliament will take notice how God hath gone before them in a tender and unbloody change, and will not hearken to them that protest against revenge, while they would use it under the name of justice. When the wheel of Providence turneth so fast, if all that have the advantage of executing their wills under the name of justice should take their advantage, you know what names and sufferings multitudes of the most useful members in such nations, in the several vicissitudes, must incur to the detriment of the commonwealth and governors.

III. You see what cause we have of thankfulness ; but I must tell you that these, as all inferior mercies, are imperfect things, and being but means to greater matters, (the heavenly interest first treated on,) they are no further significant or valuable than they have some tendency to their end : and I must further tell you, that it is much committed into the hands of man, under God, whether such beginnings shall have a happy or unhappy end. If Christ become to many a stumbling-stone, and be set for the fall of many in Israel, (Luke ii. 34,) and if the gospel itself prove the savor of death to some, no wonder if it be yet possible and too easy for a sinful land to turn these forementioned mercies and successes into most heavy judgments, and to rob themselves of all the honor and the benefit. And therefore, above all, for the Lord's sake, and for a poor, tired, yet hoping nation's sake, and for the sake of the cause of Christ through the world, I beseech you all, from the highest to the lowest, that you will be awakened to

an holy vigilancy, and look about you in your several places, lest the enemy of Christ and you should play his aftergame more successfully than now you can foresee : and lest the return of a sinful nation to their vomit should make the end yet worse than the beginning. It is not enough to have begun ; the fruit of all is yet behind. I must here deal plainly with you, however it be taken, lest I be charged with unfaithfulness at the dreadful tribunal, to which both you and I are hastening. If these beginnings, through your neglects, or any others that have been the instruments, should now be turned to the reviving and strengthening of profaneness, and malignity against the holy ways of God ; to the introduction of mere formality in religion ; to the casting out, or weakening the hands of the faithful ministers in the land ; to the destruction of order and discipline in the churches ; to the suppression of orderly and edifying meetings for mutual assistance in the matters of salvation ; or to the cherishing of ignorance or popery ; in the people it will blast the glory of all that you have done, and turn the mercy into gall. Believe it, the interest of Christ and holiness will be found at last the surest ground for any prince to build his interest upon ; and the owning of corrupt and contrary interests that engage men in quarrels with the interest of Christ, is it that hath undone so many princes and states already, that it should make the greatest learn at last, to account it their highest honor to be the servants of the King of Saints, and to devote their power to the accomplishment of his will. I need not tell you that it is the sober, godly, conscionable sort of men who know what they do, and why, that will be the honor of their governors, and the most useful of their subjects, and not the barbarous, malignant rabble, that understand not what belongs to the pleasing of God, the happiness of themselves, the good of the Commonwealth, or the honor of their king. And do you not think that remissness, to say no worse, of magistrates, who should restrain the insolencies of such, is a great dishonor to our nation, and a great temptation to many in the country, that stand at a distance from the fountain of affairs, to continue their fears lest we have changed for the worst ? Put yourselves in their cases, and tell me whether you could, with equal cheerfulness, keep this day, if you were used, as many able, faithful ministers and people are in the cities and

countries of the land, who have their persons assaulted, their windows battered, their ministrations openly reviled, and that go in danger of their lives from the brutish rabble that were formerly exasperated by the magistrates punishing them, or the minister's reproof, or crossing them in their sins. As physicians are judged of, not so much by the excellency of their remedies, as by their success, and the people think of them as they see the patients live or die, so will they do by your great performances which you mention before the Lord this day. Should they prove to the suppression of serious godliness, and the setting up of the wicked of the land, I need not tell you what a name it will leave unto the actors to all generations. But if you vigilantly improve them as you have given us abundant reason to expect, then the issue shall be the healing concord of the churches, the curbing of profaneness, the promoting of a plain and serious ministry, and of the diligent service of the Lord. This is it that will make your names immortal, that have been the happy instruments of so blessed a work. How joyfully, then, will the subjects commemorate the happy introduction of their sovereign. With what love and honor will they hear his name! How readily will they obey him! How heartily will they pray for him! How precious will your memory be! And this will be numbered among the wonderful deliverances of England. If godliness be persecuted, or made a common scorn in the land, the Holy God will vindicate his honor, and make their names a scorn and curse that shall procure it; but if you exalt him, he will exalt you. Protect his lambs, and he will be your Protector. He is with you while you are with him. (2 Chron. xv. 2.) "Those that honor him he will honor; and those that despise him shall be lightly esteemed." (1 Sam. ii. 30.)



HOW TO DO GOOD TO MANY:

OR,

THE PUBLIC GOOD

IS

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

DIRECTIONS AND MOTIVES TO IT.

INTENDED FOR AN AUDITORY OF LONDON CITIZENS;

AND

PUBLISHED FOR THEM, FOR WANT OF LEAVE TO PREACH THEM.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a people zealous of good works."—*Titus* ii. 14.



TO THE
TRULY CHRISTIAN MERCHANTS,
AND OTHER
CITIZENS OF LONDON.

As my disease, and the restraint of rulers, seem to tell me that my pulpit-work is at an end, so also my abode among you, or in this world, cannot be long. What work I have lived for, I have given the world more durable notice than transient words; it hath been such as men in power were against, and it seems, will no longer endure. What doctrine it was that I last prepared for you, I thought meet to desire the press thus to tell you; not to vindicate myself, nor to characterise them who think that it deserves six months' imprisonment, but to be in your hands a provocation and direction; for that great work of a christian life, sincerely done, will prepare you for that safety, joy, and glory, which London, England, or earth will not afford, and which men or devils cannot take from you. When through the meritorious righteousness of Christ, your holy love and good works to him in his brethren shall make you the joyful objects of that sentence, "Come ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," &c.; this is the life that need not be repented of, as spent in vain.

Dear friends, in this farewell I return you my most hearty thanks for your extraordinary love and kindness to myself, much more for your love to Christ, and to his servants, who have more needed your relief. God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love. You have visited those that others imprisoned, and fed those that others brought into want; and when some ceased not to preach for our affliction, it quenched not your impartial charity. It has been an unspeakable mercy unto me almost all my days, (when I received nothing from them,) to have known so great a number as I have done, of serious, humble, holy, charitable Christians, in whom I saw that

Christ hath an elect, peculiar people, quite different from the brutish, proud, hypocritical, malignant, unbelieving world! O how sweet hath the familiarity of such been to me, whom the ignorant world hath hated! Most of them are gone to Christ, I am following: we leave you here to longer trial: it is like you have a bitter cup to drink, but be faithful to the death, and Christ will give you the crown of life. The word of God is not bound, and the Jerusalem above is free, where is the general assembly of the first-born, an innumerable company of angels, the spirits of the just made perfect, with Christ their glorified head. The Lord guide, bless, and preserve you.

[1682.]

HOW TO DO GOOD TO MANY;
OR, THE
PUBLIC GOOD IS THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

GAL. vi. 10.

As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Good is an epithet of the highest signification of any in human language. Some think the name of God is thence derived. Greatness and wisdom are equally his attributes, but goodness is the completion, and sweetness to the creature. Christ appropriateth it to God to be good, that is, essentially, primarily, and perfectly, and universally communicative; when it is said that God is love, the sense is the same, that he is the infinite, essential, and efficiently and finally amiable, perfect good.

But though no one of his attributes in propriety and perfection are communicable, (else he that hath one part of the Deity must have all,) yet he imprinteth his similitude and image on his works; and the impress of his love and goodness is the chief part of his image on his saints; this is their very holiness; for this is the chief part of their likeness to God, and dedication to him; when the Spirit of sanctification is described in Scripture, as given upon believing, it signifieth, that our faithful perception of the redeeming, saving love of God in Christ, is that means which the Spirit of Christ will bless, to the operating of the habit of holy love to God and man, which becomes a new and divine nature to the soul, and is sanctification itself, and the true principle of a holy, evangelical conversation. And as it is said of God, that he is good, and doth good, so every thing is inclined to work as it is; Christ tells us the good tree will bring forth good fruits, &c.; and we are God's workmanship created

in Christ Jesus to good works, which God hath ordained, that we should walk in them. (Eph. ii. 10.)

Yet man doth not good as the sun shineth, by a full bent of natural necessitation, else the world would not be as it is; but as a free, undetermined agent, which hath need to be commanded by a law, and stirred up by manifold motives and exhortations; such as the Holy Ghost here useth in the text.

Where, 1. Doing good is the substance of the duty. 2. Men are the objects. 3. To all men is the extent. 4. Especially to them of the household of faith is the direction of precedency. 5. And while we have opportunity is the season, including a motive to make haste. So large and excellent a theme would require more than my allotted time to handle it fully, therefore, I shall now confine myself to the duty extended, "Do good to all men."

Doct. To do good to all men is all men's duty, to which every Christian especially must apply himself.

All men should do it: true Christians can do it, through grace, and must do it, and will do it. A good man is a common good; Christ's Spirit in them is not a dead or idle principle. It makes them in their several measures the salt of the earth, and the lights of the world; they are fruitful branches of the true vine. Every grace tendeth to well-doing, and to the good of the whole body, for which each single member is made. Even hypocrites, as wooden legs, are serviceable to the body, but every living member much more, except some diseased ones, who may be more troublesome and dangerous than the wooden leg. It is a sign he is a branch cut off and withered, who careth little for any but himself. The malignant diabolist hateth the true and spiritual good; the ignorant know not good from evil; the erroneous take evil for good, and falsehood for truth; the slothful hypocrite wisheth much good, but doth but little; the formal, ceremonious hypocrite extols the name and image of goodness; the worldly hypocrite will do good if he can do it cheaply, without any loss or suffering to his flesh; the libertine hypocrite pleadeth Christ's merits against the necessity of doing good, and looketh to be saved because Christ is good, though he be barren and ungodly; and some ignorant teachers have taught them to say,

when they can find no true faith, repentance, holiness, or obedience in themselves, that it is enough to believe that Christ believed and repented for them, and was holy and obedient for them. He was, indeed, holy and obedient for penitent believers; not to make holiness and obedience unnecessary to them, but to make them sincerely holy and obedient to himself, and to excuse them from the necessity of that perfect holiness and obedience here, which is necessary to those that will be justified by the law of works or innocency. Thus all sorts of bad men have their oppositions to doing good; but to the sincere Christian it is made as natural; his heart is set upon it; he is created, and redeemed, and sanctified for it, as the tree is made for fruit. He studieth it as the chief trade and business that he liveth for; he waketh for it; yea, he sleepeth, and eateth, and drinketh for it; even to enable his body to serve his soul, in serving that Lord whose redeemed, peculiar people are all zealous of good works. (Tit. ii. 14.) The measure of this zeal of doing good is the utmost of their power, with all their talents in desire and sincere endeavor; the extent of the object is to all, (though not to all alike,) that is to as many as they can.

But for order's sake we must here consider :

I. Who this *all* meaneth, and in what order.

II. What is good; and what is that good which we must do.

III. What qualifications he must have that will do good to many.

IV. What rules he must observe in doing it.

V. What works are they that must be done by him that would do good to many.

VI. What motives should quicken us to the practice.

VII. Some useful consecrations of the point.

I. It is God's prerogative to do good to all; man's ability will not reach it. But our all is, as many as we can do good to. 1. To men of all sorts, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, kindred, neighbors, strangers, friends, enemies, good and bad; none excepted that are within our power.

2. Not to a few only, but to as many persons of all sorts as we can; as he that hath true grace would still have more for himself; so he that doth good would fain do more good; and he that doth

good to some would fain do good to many more. All good is progressive, and tendeth towards increase and perfection ; why are the faithful said to love and long for the day of Christ's appearing, but because it is the great marriage day of the Lamb, when all the elect shall be perfect in our heavenly society ? And that makes it a more desirable day than that of our particular glorification at death. The perfection of the whole body addeth to the perfection of every part, for it is a state of felicity in perfect love ; and love maketh every man's good whom we love to be as sweet to us as our own, yea, maketh it our own ; and then the perfection and glory of every saint will be our delight and glory ; and to see each single one's love united in one perfect joy and glory, will add to each person's joy and glory. And can you wonder if our little sparks of grace do tend towards the same diffused multiplication ; and if every member long for the completing of the body of Christ ? O how much will this add to every faithful Christian's joy ? It will not be then a little flock ; not despised for singularity, nor hid in the crowd of impious sinners, nor dishonored by infirmities, or paltry quarrels among ourselves, nor with the mixture of hypocrites ; it will not be over-voted, or trod down, and persecuted by the power or number of the ignorant enemies. O Christians ! go on in doing good to all men with cheerfulness, for it all tendeth to make up the body of Christ, and to prepare for that glorious state and day ; every soul you convert, every brick that you lay in the building, tendeth to make up the house and city of God.

But as all motion and action is first upon the nearest object, so must ours ; and doing good must be in order : first we must begin at home with our own souls and lives ; and then to our nearest relations, and friends, and acquaintance, and neighbors ; and then to our societies, church, and kingdom, and all the world. But mark that the order of execution, and the order of estimation and intention, differ. Though God set up lights so small as will serve but for one room, and though we must begin at home, we must far more esteem and desire the good of multitudes, of city, and church, and commonwealth ; and must set no bounds to our endeavors, but what God and disability set.

II. But what is that good that we must do? Good is an attribute of being, and is its perfection, or well-being: God's goodness is perfection itself; and as he is the fountain of being, so also of goodness; and, therefore, his goodness is called love, whose highest act is his essential self-love, which is infinitely above his love to the world; but yet it is communicative love, which made all things good, and rested in seeing them all good. And as he is the fountain, so the same will or love is the measuring rule, and the end of all derived good. The prime notion of the creature's goodness is its conformity to the will of God; but the second is its perfection as its own, which, indeed, is but the same conformity.

Therefore, the true good which we must do men, is to make them conformable to the regulating will of God, that they may be happy in the pleased will of God; and to help them to all means for soul and body necessary hereunto; and this for as many as possibly we can.

III. The rules for judging and doing good are these. 1. That is the greatest good which is God's greatest interest; and his interest is his glory, and the complaisance of his fulfilled will.

2. Therefore, the good of the world, the church, of nations, of multitudes, is greater than the good of few.

3. The good of the soul is greater than of the body.

4. The avoiding the greatest evil is better than avoiding less.

5. Everlasting good is better than short.

6. Universal good which leaveth no evil, is better than a particular good.

7. That is the best good, as to means, which most conduceth to the end.

8. There is no earthly good that is not mixed with some evil, nor any commodity that hath not some inconvenience, or discommodity.

9. No sin must be done for any good.

10. Some things may be done for good which would be sin, were it not for the good which they are done for. It would be sin to give a robber your money, were it not to save your life, or some other commodity; it would be sin to do some things on the Lord's day, which necessity, or a greater good, may make a duty, your own

defence may make it a duty to strike another, which else would be a sin.

11. In such cases there is need of great prudence and impartiality to know whether the good or the evil do preponderate ; and a great part of the actions of our lives must be managed by that prudence, or else they will be sinful.

12. Therefore it is no small part of a minister's duty to counsel men, as a wise, skilful, and faithful casuist.

IV. To do good to many requireth many excellent qualifications ; this is so far from being every one's performance, that we should be glad if a great part of mankind did not do more hurt than good.

1. He that will do his country good, must know what is good, and what is bad ; a fool's love is hurtful ; he knoweth not how to use it ; he will love you to death, as an unskilful physician doth his most beloved patient ; or love you into calamity, as amorous fondlings often do each other. This is the great enemy of human peace, men know not good from evil : like him that killed his son, thinking he had been a thief ; or like routed soldiers, that run by mistake into the army of the enemy. Malignity and error make mad and doleful work in the world, and worst in those that should be wisest, and the greatest instruments of public good ; the Scripture mistaketh not, which tells us of enemies, and haters of God ; and most of the world are professed adversaries to Christ ; the Jews crucified him as an enemy to Cæsar, and to the safety of their law and country ; and if we may judge by their enmity to holiness, the Spirit of Christ is taken for an intolerable enemy by no small part of nominal Christians ; the laws of Christ are judged too strict ; the hypocrites that bow to him, and hate his laws, do call them hypocrites that are but serious in the practice of Christianity, and hate them that have any more religion than compliments, ceremony, and set words ; the image of a Christian and a minister is set up in militant opposition to them that are Christians and ministers indeed ; if men that are called to the sacred office would save souls in good earnest, and pull them out of the fire, and go any further than pomp and stage-work, they pass for the most insufferable men in the world : Elias is taken for the troubler of Israel, and Paul for a pestilent, seditious fellow, and the apostles as

the off-scouring of all things. Many a martyr hath died by fire, for seeking to save men from the fire of hell; and when the bedlam world is at this pass, what good is to be expected from such men? When men, called Christians, hate and oppose the God, the Christ, the Holy Ghost, to whom they were vowed in baptism; when drunkenness, and whoredom, and perjury, and lying, and all debauchery, is taken to be more friendly and tolerable than the most serious worship of God, and obedience to his laws, and avoiding sin; in a word, when the greatest good is taken for unsufferable evil, you may know what good to expect from such.

They will all tell you that we must love God above all, and our neighbors as our selves; but to fight against his word, and worship, and servants, is but an ill expression of their love to God; and seeking their destruction, because they will not sin, is an ill expression of love to their neighbors. When men judge of good and evil, as Satan teacheth them, and as selfish pride and worldly interest incline them, what wonder if such love have murdered thirty thousand, or forty thousand, at once, in France, and two hundred thousand in Ireland, and have filled the christian world with religious blood? Read but the doleful histories of church contentions for one thousand three hundred years, the stories of their wars and mutual persecutions, the streams of blood that have been shed in east and west, the inquisition, and bloody laws still kept up, and all this as good works, and done in love, and you would think that the sacred Roman hierarchy did believe that Christ hath put down the legal sacrificing of beasts, that he might, in stead of it, have the blood of men; and that he who requireth his disciples to lay down their lives for him, would have a priesthood kept up to sacrifice their lives to him, that will not wilfully break his laws. And all this is but as Christ foretold us, that his servants should be killed as a piece of service to God. No wonder if such men offer God a ludicrous, mimical sort of service, and worship him in vain, by heartless lip-labor, according to the traditions of men, when they dare sacrifice saints to the Lord of saints, and quiet their consciences by calling them such as they are themselves. But to the honor of goodness, and shame of sin, to show that they sin against the light of nature itself, they put the name of

evil upon good before they dare openly oppose and persecute it; and they put the names of good upon evil before they dare defend and justify it.

But, alas! it is not only the ungodly that do mischief, thinking verily that it is good. How many doth the church suffer by, while they prosecute their mistakes, who yet do much good in promoting the common truth which Christians are agreed in?

2. He that will do good to all or many, must have an unfeigned love to them. Hatred is mischievous, and neglect is unprofitable. Love is the natural fountain of beneficence. Love earnestly longeth to do good, and delighteth in doing it: it maketh many to be as one, and to be as ready to help others as each member of the body is to help the rest. Love maketh another's wants, sufferings, and sorrows, to be our own: and who is not willing to help himself? Love is a principle ready, active, ingenuous, and constant, it studieth to do good, and would still do more: it is patient with the infirmities of others, which men void of love do aggravate into odiousness, and make them their excuse for all their neglects, and their pretence for all their cruelties. Could you make all the slanderers, backbiters, revilers, despisers, persecutors, to love their neighbors as themselves, you may easily judge what would be the effect; and whether they would revile, or prosecute, or imprison, or ruin themselves, or study how to make themselves odious, or suborn perjured witnesses against themselves.

3. Yea, he that will do good to many, must love many better than himself, and prefer the common good much before his own, and seek his own in the common welfare. He that loveth good, as good, will best love the best: and an honest old Roman would have called him an unworthy beast that preferred his estate, or life before the common welfare. To be ready to do, suffer, or die, for their country, was a virtue which all extolled. A narrow-spirited, selfish man, will serve others no further than it serveth himself, or, at least, will stand with his own safety or prosperity. He will turn as the weathercock, and be for them that are for his worldly interest. I confess that God oft useth such for common good: but it is by raising such storms as would sink them with the ship, and leaving them no great hope to

escape by being false, or by permitting such villanies as threaten their own interest. A covetous father may be against gaming and prodigality in his children : the men of this world are wise in their generation : many that have abbey lands will be against popery ; and even atheists, and licentious men, may be loth to be slaves to politic priests, and to come under confession, and perhaps the inquisition ; and those that have not sinned themselves into madness or gross delusions, will be loth to set up a foreign jurisdiction, and become the subjects of an unknown priest, if they can help it. God often useth vice against vice ; and if no worldly, selfish men were the country's or the church's helpers, it must suffer, or trust to miracles.

But yet there is no trust to be put in these men further than their own interest must stand or fall with the common good. If God, and heaven, and conscience, be not more powerful with a man than worldly interest, trust him not against the stream and tide, or when he thinks he can make a better bargain for himself. He that will sell heaven and Christ for the world, will sell you for it, and sell religion, truth, and honesty for it : and if he escape here the end of Ahithophel and Judas, he will venture on all that is out of sight. Christ was the grand benefactor to the world, and the most excellent teacher of love, and self-denial, and contempt of the world, to all that will follow him in doing good to many.

4. He that will do much good must be good himself. Make the tree good if you have good fruit. *Operari sequitur esse*. A bad man is an enemy to the greatest good that he should do. Malignity abhorreth serious piety, and will such promote it ? If Elias be a man of miracles, he shall hear, " Hast thou found me, O my enemy ! " And Micaiah shall hear, " I hate him, for he prophesieth not good of me, but evil : feed him with the bread and water of affliction."

And a bad man, if by accident he be engaged for a good cause, is still suspected by those that know him. They cannot trust him, as being a slave to lust, and to strong temptations, and a secret enemy to the true interest of his country. Alas ! the best are hardly to be trusted far, as being liable to miscarry by infirmity ; how little then is to be hoped for from the wicked ?

4. He that will do much good in the world, must be furnished with considerable abilities, especially prudence and skill in knowing when, and to whom, and how to do it. Without this, he will do more harm than good. Even good men, when they have done much good, by some one miscarriage, tempted by the remnants of selfishness and pride, and by unskillful rashness, have undone all the good they did, and done as much hurt as wicked enemies. There goeth so much to public good, and so many snares are to be avoided, that rash, self-conceited, half-witted men do seldom do much, unless under the conduct of wiser men.

6. He that will be a public blessing to the world, must have a very large prospect, and see the state of all the world, and foresee what is like to come. He must not live as if his neighborhood were all the land, or his country or his party were all the church, or all the world: he must know what relation all our actions have to other nations, and to all the church of Christ on earth. The want of this universal prospect involveth many in censorious and dividing sects, who would abhor that way if they knew the case of all the church and world.

And we must not look only to a present exigent or advantage, but foresee how our actions will look hereafter, and what changes may put them under other judgments, and what the fruits may be to posterity. Many things cause death which give the patient present ease.

7. He that will go good to many must have christian fortitude, and not be discouraged with difficulties and opposition. He must serve God for the good of men with absolute resolution, and not with the hypocrite's reserves. He must be armed with patience against not only the malice of enemies, but the ingratitude of friends. The follies, the quarrels, the mutinies, and divisions, and often the abuses of that he would do good to, must not overcome him. He must imitate God, and do good to the evil, and bless those that curse him, and pray for them that spitefully use him. He must not promise himself more success than God hath promised him, nor yet despair and turn back discouraged; but conscience must carry him on to the end through all, whatever shall befall him.

8. Therefore he must look for his reward from God, and not expect too much from man. Men are insufficient, mutable, and un-

certain : their interests and many accidents may change them. The multitude are of many minds and tempers ; and if you please some, you shall displease others, and it is hard to please even one person long. Some great ones will not be pleased, unless you will prefer their wills before the will of God, your country's good, and your own salvation. The poor are so many and so indigent, that no man can answer their desires. If you give twenty pounds to twenty of the poor, forty or an hundred, that expected the like, will murmur at you, and be displeased. What man ever did so much good in the world as not to be accused by some, as if he were a covetous or a hurtful man ?

Therefore, he that will do much good, must firmly believe the life to come, and must do that he doth as the work of God, in obedience to him, and look for his reward in heaven, and not as the hypocrite, in the praise of men, much less as the worldling, in the hope of temporal advantage. He must not wonder if he be rewarded as Socrates was at Athens, and as Christ and his apostles were in the world. Themistocles likened himself to a great fruit tree, which men run for shelter under in a storm, and when the storm is over, they throw stones and cudgels at it, to beat down the fruit. Reckon not on a reward from men, but from God.

By what is said, you may perceive what are the great impediments of doing good to many, which must be overcome.

i. One, and the worst, is malignity, which is an enmity to spiritual good ; for who will promote that which he is against ?

ii. Another is unbelief of God's commands and promises, when men take not themselves to be his subjects and stewards, nor can take his promise for good security for their reward.

iii. Another is the forementioned sin of selfishness, which makes a man's self to be his chiefest love and care, and more to him than Christ's interest, or the church or kingdom.

iv. Another is a false conceit that a man is so obliged to provide for his children and kindred, that all that he can get, how rich soever he be, must be left to make them rich, except some inconsiderable pittance.

v. Another is a great neglect of parents to prepare their children to be profitable to the commonwealth, but only to live in prosperity to themselves. 1. Children should be taught as much as may be to become persons of understanding, and such wisdom as may make them useful. 2. And especially to be truly religious; for then they will be devoted to do good, in love and obedience to God. 3. They should be taught what it is to be members of societies, and what duty they owe to church and state, and how great a part of their duty lieth in caring for the common good, and how sinful and damnable it is to live only to themselves, and how much this selfishness is the sum of all iniquity. 4. Those callings should be chosen for them which they are fittest for, and in which they may do most public good.

vi. And a timorous, cowardly disposition is a great hinderance to public good; for such will be still for the self-saving way, and afraid of the dangers that attend the greatest duties. If they are called to liberality, they will fear lest they should want themselves. In all costly or hazardous duty there will still be a lion in their way. They cannot trust God; and no wonder, then, if they are not to be trusted themselves.

vii. Lastly, sloth and idleness are constant enemies to well-doing. There are two sorts especially guilty of this; one, and the better, is some religious people, who think that their business is only with God and their own hearts, and that if they could spend all their time in meditation, prayer, and such like exercises, it would be the best kind of life on earth. Among the papists, multitudes, by this conceit, turn friars, and nuns. Among us, such spend all their time in hearing sermons, and in reading, and meditating, and prayer, and such like exercises of religion towards God, if they are but rich enough to live without bodily labor, and the example of Mary and Martha, they think will make this good.

I know that this is no common error. The wicked are of a far different mind. And I know no man can do too much to save his soul; but we may do one sort of our work too much to the neglect of other parts. We have souls in flesh, and both parts have their proper necessity and work. Mary did somewhat else than hear,

though she wisely preferred it in its season. And no one is made for himself alone. You feel that religious exercises do you good, but what good is it that you do to others? I confess a monk's prayers for others is a good work. But God will have praying and endeavoring go together, both for yourselves and others. Bare praying God to relieve the poor, and to teach your children, and instruct the ignorant, will not excuse you from relieving, teaching, or instructing them. Yea, and your own good will best come in by your fullest obedience to God. Do what he bids you, and he will take care of your salvation. Your own way may seem best, but will not prove best: it will but cast you into melancholy and disability at last. "Six days shalt thou labor," is more than a permission. It is St. Paul's canon, "He that will not work, (if able,) let him not eat:" and it was King Solomon's mother who taught him the description of a virtuous woman, (Prov. xxxi. 27,) "She eateth not the bread of idleness." God will have mercy and obedience as better than sacrifice. The sentence in judgment is upon doing to Christ in his members, (Matt. xxv,) when many that hear much, and prophesied, shall be cast out. (Matt. vii. 21.) Doing good is the surest way of receiving good. The duties of the first and second table must go together. He that is not zealous to do good, as well as to get good, hath not the peculiar nature of Christ's flock; (Titus ii. 14;) and zeal will be diligent, and not for sloth.

The other sort of the idle are rich, ungodly, worldly persons, who live as if God did give them plenty for nothing but to pamper their own flesh, and feed their own and other's sensuality. They think that persons of wealth and honor may lawfully spend their time in idleness, that is, in Sodom's sin, (Ezek. xvi. 49,) as if God expected least where he giveth most. How little conscience do many lords and ladies make of an idle hour, or life! When poor men's labor is such as tendeth to the common good, the rich, by luxury, sacrifice to the flesh the fruits of other men's endeavors; and instead of living in any profitable employment, devour that which thousands labor for.

It is not the toilsome drudgery of the vulgar which we take to be all rich folks' duty; but idleness and unprofitableness is a sin in the

richest. Any of them may find good work enough that is fit for them, if they be willing. Children, and servants, and friends, and neighbors, and tenants, have souls and bodies which need their help. None can say, 'God found us no work to do,' or that God gave them more time or wealth than they had profitable use for. Little do they think what it will be, ere long, to reckon for all their time and estates, and to be judged according to their works: and their own flesh often payeth dear for its ease and pleasure, by those pains and diseases which God hath suited to their sins; and which usually shorten the lives which they no better use, or snatch them away from that time and wealth which they spent in preparing fuel for hell, and food for the worm that never dieth.

V. But what is it that a man should do that would do good to all or many? There are some good works which are of far greater tendency than others, to the good of many; some of them I will name to you.

i. Do as much good as you are able to men's bodies, in order to the greater good of souls. If nature be not supported, men are not capable of other good. We pray for our daily bread before pardon and spiritual blessings, not as if it were better, but that nature is supposed before grace, and we cannot be Christians if we be not men; God hath so placed the soul in the body, that good or evil shall make its entrance by the bodily senses to the soul. This way God himself conveyeth many of his blessings, and this way he inflicteth his corrections; ministers that are able and willing to be liberal, find by great experience that kindness and bounty to men's bodies openeth the ear to counsel, and maketh them willing to hear instruction: those in France, that are now trying men's religion in the market, and are at work with money in one hand, and a sword in the other, do understand this to be true. All men are sensible of pain or pleasure, good or evil, to the flesh, before they are sensible what is necessary for their souls. You must therefore speak on that side which can hear, and work upon the feeling part, if you will do good.

Besides this your charity may remove many great impediments and temptations. It is no easy thing to keep heavenly thoughts upon your mind, and especially to delight in God, and keep the relish of

his law upon your hearts, while pinching wants are calling away your mind, and disturbing it with troublesome passions. To suffer some hunger, and go in vile apparel, is not very difficult ; but when there is a family to provide for, a discontented wife and children to satisfy, rents, and debts and demands unpaid, it must be an excellent Christian that can live contentedly, and cast all his useless care on God, and keep up the sense of his love, and a delight in all his service. Do your best to save the poor from such temptations, as you would yourselves be saved from them.

And when you give to the poor that are ignorant and ungodly, give them after it some counsel for their souls, or some good book which is suited to their cases.

ii. If you would do good to many, set yourselves to promote the practical knowledge of the great truths necessary to salvation.

1. Goodness will never be enjoyed or practised without knowledge. Ignorance is darkness, the state of his kingdom who is the prince of darkness, who by the works of darkness leadeth the blind world to utter darkness ; God is the father of lights, and giveth wisdom to them that ask and seek it ; he sent his Son to be the light of the world ; his word and ministers are subordinate light ; his servants are all the children of light ; ignorance is virtually error, and error the cause of sin and misery. And men are not born wise, but must be made wise by skillful, diligent teaching : parents should begin it, ministers should second them ; but, alas ! how many millions are neglected by both ! and how many neglect themselves, when ministers have done their best ! Ignorance and error are the common road to wickedness, misery, and hell.

2. But what can any others do for such ? Two things I will remember you of, 1. Set up such schools as shall teach children to read the Scriptures, and learn the catechism or principles of religion. Our departed friend, Mr. Thomas Gouge, did set us an excellent pattern for Wales. I think we have grammar schools enough. It is not the knowledge of tongues, and arts, and curious sciences, which the common people want, but the right understanding of their baptismal covenant with God, and of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, and Church Communion. A poor honest man, or a good

woman, will teach children thus much for a small stipend, better than they are taught it in most grammar schools; and I would none went to the Universities without the sound understanding of the catechism; yea, I would none came thence, or into the pulpit without it.

2. When you have got them to read, give them good books, especially Bibles, and good catechisms, and small practical books, which press the fundamentals on their consciences. Such books are good catechisms; many learn the words of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Commandments, and Catechism, by rote, and never understand them, when a lively book that awakeneth their consciences, bringeth them to sensible consideration, and to a true understanding of the same things, which before they could repeat without sense or savor. It is the catechistical truths which most of our English sermons press; and the lively pressing them maketh them pierce deeper than a catechism.

If men that in life, or at death, give a stated revenue for good works, would settle the one half on a catechising English school, and the other half on some suitable good books, it might prove a very great means of public reformation. When a good book is in the house, if some despise it, others may read it; and when one parish is provided, every year's rent may extend the charity to other parishes, and it may spread over a whole county in a little time. Most of the good that God hath done for me, for knowledge or conscience, hath been by sound and pious books.

iii. A great means of public good is the right ordering of families all the week, but especially on the Lord's Day. Though the ministry be the usual means of converting heathens and infidels, christian education by parents is the first means appointed by God for the holy principling of youth: parents must teach them with unwearied diligence, lying down and rising up. (Deut. vi. 11.) And they that will expect God's blessings must use his appointed means. Nature teacheth men and brutes to provide for their offspring with diligence and patience: and as grace teacheth believers to expect far greater things for themselves and their children, that this world affordeth, so it obligeth them to be at so much greater diligence to obtain it. An everlasting kingdom deserveth more labor than a trade or full estate

for the flesh. If all parents did their parts to make their children sanctified believers, as well as they expect the schoolmaster should do his part to make them scholars, and the master do his part to teach them their trades, we might hope that ministers would find them fitter for church work, and that godliness would not be so rare, nor so many wicked children break their parents' hearts. But of this I have spoken lately in my 'Counsel to Young Men.'

Religion is never like to prosper if it be not made a family work. If it be there made the business of the house, and done with reverent seriousness, and constancy, if magistracy and ministry should fail, yet families would propagate and preserve it. Begin with a reverent begging the help and blessing of God, then read his word and call upon his name; speak serious words of counsel to inferiors; spend the Lord's Day as much as may be in public worship, and the rest in reading godly books, and in singing God's praise, and calling on his name; put suitable books into the hands of servants and children to read when they have leisure; encourage them in it with love and rewards; and keep out of the way of temptation; and then God's blessing will dwell in your families, and they will be as churches of God. If any complain of negligent ministers, or persecuting magistrates, and will not do their own family duties, which none forbid, they condemn themselves.

iv. If you would be public blessings, and do good to many, do your best to procure a skilful, faithful, ministry in the church:

1. Send no son to the university who doth not first show these three qualifications: a capable, natural wit and utterance; a love to serious, practical religion; a great desire to serve God in the ministry, though it should be in suffering from men. If they want any one of these, design them to some other calling; devote not an indisposed lad to the ministry, in hope that God will make him better, but stay till he is better.

2. Seeing pastors are here obtruded upon the flock, it is a work of great importance, for religious gentlemen to buy as many advowsons or presentations as they can, that they may introduce the best that they can get.

God hath hitherto made use of the qualifications of the ministers as the special means for the welfare of his church. The bare title and office is so far from sufficing, without the skill and fidelity of the persons, that such have been the great corrupters and disturbers of the church. When pious men have heaped up riches and honors upon the clergy, these have been baits for the worst men to become seekers, and make the sacred ministry but a trade for wealth : and if carnal, worldly men be ministers, alas ! what plagues may they be to the people and themselves ! They will hate the spiritual practice of doctrine which they preach. When they have told men of a heaven and hell, and the necessity of a holy heart and life, as if they had been in jest ; they will take those for hypocrites that believe them, and live accordingly. They will take the best of the flock for their enemies, because they are enemies to their hypocrisy and vice. Instead of imitating St. Paul, (Acts xx,) who taught them publicly, and from house to house, day and night, with tears, they will turn the ministry into compliment and formality, and think, by saying a cold, unskilful sermon, and by rotting over a few heartless words, they have laudably performed their part. They will take those for their best hearers who will most honor them, and best pay them, though ever so ignorant and ungodly ; and their spleen will swell against the best and most religious people, because they dislike their unfaithful lives and ministration. If religion should be in public danger, these will be the Judases that will sell it for gain. They will do any thing rather than suffer much. They are ministers of the world, and not of Christ : readier to make crosses for others than to bear the cross of Christ ; for it is gain that is their godliness ; and when their treachery is seen and hated, they will hate the haters of it ; and the studies of malignant men will be their laboratories, and the pulpits the place where the sublimate and essence of malice must be vended. How effectually will Satan's work be done when it is performed in the formalities of the sacred ministry, and in the name of Christ ! O what hath the Church suffered by a worldly, graceless ministry these thousand years, and more ! and what doth it yet suffer by them in the east and west !

But, on the other side, a skilful, faithful minister will preach sound doctrine, and worship God with serious devotion, and live to Christ, and the church's good. He will speak the word of truth and life with truth and liveliness, as one that believeth what he saith, and feeleth the power of it on his heart. Though he must have food and raiment as other men, it is the saving and edifying of souls which is his work, to which he bendeth all his studies, for which he prayeth and longeth, and in which he rejoiceth, and to which all his worldly interest not only giveth place, but is made to serve. He will think no price, no pains or suffering too dear, so that the souls of men be saved; this is the riches and preferment which he desireth. He hath nothing too good or too dear for Christ, or for the meanest of his servants, when Christ requireth it. He is willing to spend and be spent for their sakes. It is them, and not theirs, that he desireth. He feareth the unbelief and hard-heartedness of his hearers, and lest they should reject their own salvation more than all the slanders or persecutions of their enemies. In a word, his heart, his study, his life and business, is to do all the good he can, and they that under such a ministry remain impenitent, and hardened in sin, are the most hopeless, miserable people in the world.

v. And it greatly conduceth to public good to keep up true order and christian discipline in the particular churches. Though popish church tyrants have turned the church keys into a military, reigning, or revenging sword, yet Christ did not in vain commit them into his minister's hands. Religion seldom prospereth well where the church is no enclosure, but a common, where all sorts, undistinguished, meet; where, as the people know not who shall be made their pastors, but must trust their souls to the care of any that a patron chooseth, so the pastor knoweth not who are his communicating flock until he see them come to the Lord's table, no, nor when he seeth them. When it goeth for a sufficient excuse to the pastors if the rabble of wicked men communicate, or pass for his church members, though they communicate not, if he can but say, I knew them not to be wicked, (and how should he when he knew them not at all?) and that none accused them, when they are mere strangers to each other. In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcis-

ion availeth any thing, but a new creature, and faith that worketh by love. And if Christ made his servants no better than the world, who would believe that he is the Savior of the world? There will be some tares in Christ's field till his judgment cast them out for ever. But if it be not a society professing holiness, and disowning unholiness, and making a difference between the clean and the unclean, him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath, him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; Christ will disown them as workers of iniquity, though they had ate and drank with him, and done miracles in his name. (Matt. vii.) Much more if it be a society where godliness is despised, and the most godly excommunicated, if they differ but in a formality of ceremony from Diotrephes, and the wicked rabble tolerated and cherished in reviling serious godliness, on pretence of opposing such dissenters. Christ will not own that pastor nor society which owneth not conscience and serious piety.

If the pastors set up their wills and traditions before the laws and will of Christ, and call out, 'Who is on our side,' instead of 'Who is on Christ's side,' and fall out with the sheep, and worry and scatter them, and cherish the goats, and tolerate the wolves, wo to those shepherds, when Christ shall judge them! I wonder not if such incline to infidelity, though they live by the name and image of Christianity, and if they be loth to believe that there will be such a day of judgment which they have so much cause to fear.

But the prudent, loving guidance of faithful pastors is so necessary to the church, that without it there will be envy and strife, confusion, and every evil work, and a headless multitude, though otherwise well-meaning, pious people, will be all wise, and all teachers, till they have no wise teachers left, and will crumble all into dissolution, or into shameful sects. St. Paul told us of two games that Satan hath to play, (Acts xx,) one by grievous wolves, that shall devour the flock, (though in sheep's clothing, yet known by their bloody jaws,) the other by men from among yourselves, who shall speak perverse things, to draw disciples after them.

vi. If you would promote the good of all or many, promote the love and concord of all that deserve to be called Christians.

To which end you must, 1. Know who those are ; and, 2. Skillfully and faithfully endeavor it.

1. Far be it from any Christian to think that Christ hath not so much as told us what Christianity is, and who they be that we must take for Christians, when he hath commanded them all so earnestly to love each other. Is not baptism our christening ? Every one that hath entered into that covenant with Christ, and understandingly and seriously professeth to stand to it, and is not proved by inconsistent words or deeds to nullify that profession, is to be taken for a Christian, and used in love and communion as such.

Consider of these words, and consider whether all churches have walked by this rule, and whether swerving from it have not been the cause of corruption and confusion.

He is a Christian fit for our communion, who is baptised in infancy, and owneth it solemnly at age ; and so is he that was not baptised till he himself believed.

He is a Christian that believeth Christ to be true God and true man in one person, and trusteth him as our only Redeemer, by his merits and passions, and our Mediator in the heavens ; and obeyeth him as our sovereign Lord, for pardon, for his Spirit, and for salvation. And as a Christian this man is to be loved and used, though he have not so much skill in metaphysics as to know whether it be a proper speech to call Mary the mother of God, or that one of the Trinity was crucified ; or to know in what sense Christ's natures might be called one or two ; and in what sense he might be said to have one will or two wills—one operation or two ; and know not whether the *tria capitula* were to be condemned : yea, though he could not define, or clearly tell, what *hypostasis persona*, yea, or *substantia*, signifieth in God ; nor tell whether God of gods be a proper speech.

This man is a Christian, though he know not whether patriarchal, and metropolitical, and diocesan church forms, be according to the will of Christ, or against it ; and whether symbolical signs, in the worship of God, may lawfully be devised and imposed by men ; and whether some doubtful words, in oaths and subscriptions of men's imposing, being unnecessary, be lawful ; and how far he may, by

them, incur the guilt of perjury, or deliberate lying : and though he think that a minister may preach and pray in fit words of his own, though he read not a sermon or prayer written for him by others, who think that no words but theirs should be offered to God or man.

2. If Christ's description of a Christian be forsaken, and mere Christianity seem not a sufficient qualification for our love and concord, men will never know where to rest, nor ever agree in any one's determination but Christ's. All men that can get power will be making their own wills the rule and law, and others will not think of them as they do; and the variety of fallible, mutable church laws, and terms of concord, will be the engine of perpetual discord, as Ulpian told honest Alexander Severus the laws would be, which he thought to have made for sober concord, in fashions of apparel. Those that are united to Christ by faith, and have his sanctifying Spirit, and are justified by him, and shall dwell with him in heaven, are certainly Christians; and such as Christ hath commanded us to love as ourselves. And seeing that it is his livery by which his disciples must be known, by loving one another, and the false prophets must be known by the fruits of their hurtfulness, as wolves, thorns, and thistles, I must profess (though order and government have been so amiable to me as to tempt me to favorable thoughts of some Roman power in the church) I am utterly irreconcilable to it, when I see that the very complexion of that hierarchy is malice and bloodiness against men most seriously and humbly pious, that dare not obey them in their sinful usurpations, and that their cause is maintained by be-lying, hating, and murdering true Christians.

And, on the other side, too many make laws of love and communion to themselves, and confine Christ's church within their little various, and perhaps erroneous, sects; and all others they love with pity; but only those of their cabin and singular opinions they love with complacency and communion: those that condemn such as Christ justifieth, and say that Christians are not his, are near of kin to one another, though one sort show it by persecution, and the other but by excommunication, or schismatical separation. "We are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. iv. 28.) And, therefore, I advise all Christians to hate the causes and ways of hatred, and love all the causes

and means of love. Frown on them that so extol their singular sentiments as to backbite others, and speak evil of what they understand not : especially such as the pamphleteers of this age, whose design is weekly and daily to fight against christian love, and to stir up all men, to the utmost of their power, to think odiously of one another, and plainly to stir up a thirst after blood : never did Satan write by the hand of man if he do it not by such as these : the Lord of love and mercy rebuke them !

And take heed of them that can find enough in the best that are against their way to prove them dishonest, if not intolerable ; and can see the mote of a ceremony, or nonconformity to a ceremony, in their brother's eye, and not the beam of malice, or cruelty, in their own. Take heed of those that are either for confounding toleration of all, or for dissipating cruelty on pretence of unity.

That land, or church, shall never truly prosper where these three sorts are not well distinguished : 1. The approved, that are to be encouraged. 2. The tolerable, that are to be patiently and lovingly endured. 3. The intolerable, that are to be restrained. They may as well confound men and beasts, wise men and mad men, adults and infants, as confound these three sorts, in reference to religion.

I add this note to prevent objections, that though meekness and gentleness promote peace ; yet, to speak sharply and hatefully of hatred, unpeaceableness, and cruelty, and all that tends to destroy love is an act of love, and not of an uncharitable, unpeaceable man.

vii. If you love the common good of England, do your best to keep up sound serious religion in the public parish churches, and be not guilty of any thing that shall bring the chief interest of religion into private assemblies of men only tolerated, if you can avoid it.

Indeed, in a time of plagues, and epidemical infection, tolerated churches may be the best preservatives of religion, as it was the first 300 years, and in the Arians' reign, and under popery ; but where sound and serious religion is owned by the magistrate, tolerated churches are but as hospitals for the sick, and must not be the receptacle of all the healthful. And, doubtless, if the papists can but get the protestant interest once into prohibited or tolerated conventicles, (as they will call them,) they have more than half overcome it, and

will not doubt to use it next as they do in France, and by one turn more to cast it out. The countenance of authority will go far with the vulgar against all the scruples that men of conscience stick at, and they will mostly go to the allowed churches, whoever is there. Let us, therefore lose no possession that we can justly get, nor be guilty of disgracing the honest conformists, but do all we can to keep up their reputation for the good of souls. They see not matters of difference through the same glass that we do ; they think us unwarrantably scrupulous. We think the matter of their sin to be very great ; but we know that before God the degree of guilt is much according to the degree of men's negligence or unwillingness to know the truth, or to obey it ; and prejudice, education, and converse, make great difference on men's apprehensions. Charity must not reconcile us to sin, but there is no end of uncharitable censuring each other.

It hath made me admire to hear some men's words against comprehension, as they call it ; that they would not have rulers revoke that which they judge to be heinous sin in their impositions, unless they will revoke all that they think unlawful, lest it should strengthen the parish churches, and weaken the tolerated or suffering part ; I will not here open the sin of this policy as it deserves ; but I wish them to read a small book called, 'The Whole Duty of Nations,' said to be Mr. Thomas Beverley's.

viii. If you love the common good, take heed lest any injuries tempt you into sedition or unlawful wars ; no man, that never tried them can easily believe what enemies wars and tumults are to religion, and to common honesty and sobriety. Men are there so serious about their lives and bodily safety that they have no room or time for serious worshipping of God ; the Lord's day is by necessity made a common day ; and all men's goods are almost common to the will of the soldiers ; either power seems to authorize them, or necessity to allow them to use the goods of others as their own, as if they were incapable of doing wrong ; it is their honor that can kill most ; and how little place there is for love it is easy to conceive.

I doubt not but it is lawful to fight for our king or country, in a good cause. As nature giveth all private men a right of private self-defence, and no more, so the same law of nature, which is God's



law, giveth all nations a right of public self-defence against its public enemies ; that is, against any that by his religion, or his own profession, bindeth himself to destroy that nation if he can, or by open arms seeketh no less than their destruction ; but as few calamities are worse to a land than war, so much is to be endured to prevent it. It is like a red-hot iron which fools lay hold on, thinking it is gold, till it fetch off skin and flesh to the bones, and perhaps set the house on fire. If your cause be bad, God will not be for you ; and he that so taketh the sword shall perish with the sword ; and if you bite and devour one another, you shall be devoured one of another. And, alas ! thousands of the innocent usually perish, or are ruined, in the flames that furious men do kindle ; no doubt as suffering in prison, so venturing in war, is a duty, when God calls you to it ; but in itself a prison is a far more desirable sort of suffering than a war. Therefore, between the danger of the miseries of an unlawful war, and the danger of betraying our king or kingdom, for want of necessary defence, how cautelous should all sober Christians be !

ix. If you would promote the common good, do your best to procure wise and faithful rulers.

Quest. What can private men do in this ?

Ans. 1. In cases where they have choosing voices they ought to prefer the best with greatest resolution, and not for slothfulness to omit their part, nor for worldly interest, or the fear of men, betray their country, as ever they would escape the punishment of the perfidious. Wo to that Judas that sells his country and conscience for any bribe, or by self-saving fear !

2. In other cases, where you have no choosing vote with men, you have a praying voice with God : pray for kings, and all in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. God hath commandeth no duty in vain : do it earnestly and constantly, and hope for a good issue from God ; do it not selfishly that you may have prosperity or preferment by them, but sincerely for their own and the common good ; God is the fountain of power, the absolute sovereign of all the world ; men are but his provincial officers ; none claimeth an universal government of the world but one that pretendeth to be Christ's vicar-general, and none believe

his claim but blinded men. There is no power but of and under God, who hath made rulers his ministers for our good, to be a praise to them that do well, and a terror to evil doers; that they that will not be moved with the hopes of God's future rewards, and the fears of his punishments, may be moved by that which is near them within the reach of sense. And all men regard their bodies, though only believers are ruled by the everlasting interest of their souls.

Therefore, pray hard for kings and magistrates; for if they be good they are exceeding great blessings to the world. They will remember that their power is for God, and the common good, and that to God they must give a strict account; they will take God's law for the only universal law to the world, and conform their own as by-laws to it. They will take their own interest to consist in pleasing God, and promoting the gospel and kingdom of Christ, and the piety and saving of men's souls. They will be examples of serious godliness, of justice and sobriety, trustiness, and temperance, and chastity to their subjects; in their eyes a vile person will be condemned, but they will honor those that fear the Lord. (Psalm xv. 4.) They will love those most that love Christ best, and most diligently obey him, and tenderly fear to sin against him; those please them best that please God best, and are most useful to the common good; they will set their hearts on the people's welfare, and are watching for all, while all securely live under their vigilancy. They will cherish all that Christ cherisheth, and especially the faithful pastors of the churches, that seek not the world, but the welfare of the flocks; when some are saying, 'In this mountain we must worship God,' and some, 'at Jerusalem,' they will teach them all to worship God in spirit and truth. When pastors and people grow peevish and quarrelsome for their several interests, opinions, and wills, a Constantine will cast all their libels into the fire, and rebuke the unpeaceable, and restrain the violent, and teach them to forgive and love each other, and will be the great justice of peace to all the churches in the land, and pare their nails that would tear and scratch their brethren; he will countenance the sound and peaceable, and tolerate all the tolerable, but will tie the hands of strikers, and the tongues of revilers; he will contrive the healing of exasperated minds, and take away the

occasions of division, and rebuke them that call for fire from heaven, or for the sword to do that which belongeth to the word, or to execute their pride and wrath. Godliness will have all the encouragement they can give it, and innocency a full defence ; malignity, and persecution, and perjury, and unpeaceable revenge, will be hateful where they rule ; and they had rather men feared sin too much than too little ; and would have all men prefer the law and honor of God to theirs. Where the righteous bear rule, the people rejoice ; the wisdom, piety, and impartiality of their governors suppresseth profaneness, oppression, and contention, and keepeth men in the way of love and peace ; and as the welfare of all is the care of such a ruler above his own pleasure, wealth, or will, so he will have the hearts, and hands, and wealth of all with readiness to serve him. No wonder if such are called nursing-fathers, and the light of our eyes, and the breath of our nostrils, and the shadow of a rock in a weary land. As they bear the image of God's super-eminency, and doubly honor him, they are doubly honored by him ; so that the names of pious princes show not only the sense of mankind, but the special providence of God in making the memory of the just to be blessed ; and as they could not endure to see in their days ungodliness triumph, or serious godliness made a scorn, or conscience and fear of sinning made a disgrace, or the gospel hindered, and faithful ministers forbid to preach it ; so God will not suffer their consciences to want the sense of his love, nor their departing souls to fail of their everlasting hopes, nor their memories to be clouded by obscurity or reproach. Even among heathens what a name have those emperors left behind them who lived in justice, charity, and all virtue, and wholly studied the good of all ? What a wonder is it that M. Antonine should be so extolled by so many writers, and not one of them all, as I remember, speak one word of evil of him, save that a small short persecution of the Christian was made in his time, till he restrained it ! And all the people almost deified him, and would have perpetuated his line and name in the throne, but that the horrid wickedness of his posterity forced them to a change. What a name hath excellent Alexander Severus left behind him ! And what a blessing have wise, and godly, and peace-making christian princes been in divers ages to the world.

And both the inferior magistrates and the clergy usually much conform themselves, at least in outward behavior, to their example; for they will choose men of wisdom, conscience, and justice, under them, to judge and govern. The bishops and pastors which they choose will be able, godly, laborious men; not seekers of worldly wealth and honor, nor envious silencers of faithful preachers, nor jealous hinderers of religious duties, nor flattering men-pleasers, not such as lord it over God's heritage; but such as rule not by constraint, but willingly, as examples of love and piety to the flock. Pray hard, therefore, for kings and all in authority, and honor all such as unspeakable blessings for the good of all.

But, on the contrary, wicked rulers will be Satan's captains, against Jesus Christ, and men's sanctification and salvation. They will be wolves in the place of shepherds, and will study to destroy the best of the people, and to root out all serious godliness and justice. Conscience, and fearing sin, will be to them a suspected, yea, a hated thing. If any abuse it, it serves them for a pretence against it. They take the people's welfare and their own interest to be enemies, and presently look on those, whom they should rule and cherish, as the adversaries whom they must tread down. They will purposely make edicts and laws that are contrary to God's law, that they may have advantage to persecute the faithful, and to destroy them as disobedient. They will study to conquer conscience and obedience to God, lest his authority should be regarded above theirs, and Christ is used by them as if he were an usurper, and not their Sovereign, but were again to be taken for an enemy to Cæsar; and their hatred to true ministers will be such as Paul's accusers intimate, who said, "He preached another king, one Jesus." Wicked rulers will be the capital enemies to all that will be enemies to wickedness, and resolved to please God and save their souls. They will not be obeyed under God, but before him, nor served by the faithful servants of Christ, nor pleased but at the rate of men's damnation, by displeasing God. All men love their like. The worst men, if flatterers, will seem the best to them, and the best the worst and most intolerable, and church and state is like to be written by their copy. O what dreadful plagues have wicked rulers been to the world, and

what a dismal case do they continue the earth in to this day! Not but that people, and especially priests, do contribute hereto, but the chief authors are men in greatest power. Five parts of six of the world at this day are heathens and infidels. And what's the cause? Rulers will not suffer the gospel to be preached to them. The eastern Christians were all torn in pieces by the wickedness and contention of the governors of the state and church, banishing and murdering one another, so that when the Turks invaded them, the promise of liberty to exercise their religion tempted them to make the less resistance, thinking they could not be much worse than before. But the vulgar are so apt to follow the rulers, that ever since, the most of the Easterns are apostatised from Christ, and turned to Mahometanism, though in those countries where the Turk alloweth the christian people to have governors of their own, religion somewhat prospereth, yet where that privilege is denied them, and Turks only are their rulers, it withereth away, and comes to almost nothing.

And what keepeth out reformation, that is, the primitive simple Christianity, from the popish countries that have religion corrupted by human superfluities, but the seduction of priests, and tyranny of rulers, that will not endure the preaching of the gospel, and the opening of the Scriptures to the people in a known tongue? How much holy blood have Roman and Spanish inquisitors, and French and Irish murderers, and most other popish rulers to answer for? Even Walsh, the papist, in his Irish history, tells us all, out of Ketin, and others, how commonly for ages, they lived there in the sin of bloody wars and murders, yea, even when they professed great holiness. Wicked rulers are as the pikes in the pond, which live by devouring all about them. It is Satan's main design in the world to corrupt God's two great ordinances of magistracy and ministry, and turn them both against Christ's kingdom, and to destroy Christians in Christ's name. Oh! therefore, pray hard that all christian nations may have good rulers, and be very thankful to God for such.

x. And if you would be instruments of public good, know what are public sins and dangers, that you may do your part against them, and join not with any that will promise never to endeavor any reforming alteration. The chiefest are ignorance, pride, and self-willed-

ness in teachers and people, malignant enmity to goodness, impatience with the infirmities of good men, judging of persons and things by self-interest, covetousness, sensuality, and taking Christianity but as the religion of the land, without diligent study to be rooted in the truth. And the scandals of hypocrites and tempted Christians hardening the enemies, especially by divisions, and public temerities, and miscarriages, is not the least.

xi. I would also, in order to public good, persuade serious Christians to be more zealous in communication with their neighbors, and live not overstrangely to others, and say not as Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Be kind and loving to all about you, and live not as unknown men to them; nor alienate them by sourness, contempt, or needless singularity, but become all things lawful, to all men, to save some; lend them good books, and draw them to hear God's faithful ministers; persuade them to pray in their families, even with a form or book; till they need it not.

xii. Lastly if you would do good, be such as you would have others be, and teach them by examples of piety, charity, patience, self-denial, forbearing, and forgiving, and not by mere words contradicted by your lives. These are the materials by which you must do good to all.

VI. What now remaineth but that we all set ourselves to such a fruitful course of life? I greatly rejoice in the grace of God, which I daily see in many such of my familiar acquaintance, who study to do good to all, and to live in love, and peace, and holiness, by example, and by self-denial, and constant charity, using Christ's talents to their Master's ends, for the temporal and eternal good of many. But, alas! too many live as if it were enough to do no harm, and say, as the slothful servant, "Here is thy talent which I hid."

And some there be that, in a blind jealousy of the doctrine of justification, (not understanding what the word justification signifieth,) cry down even the words of James, as if they were irreconcilable with Paul's, and can scarce bear him that saith as Christ, (Matt. xii.) "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned;" as if they had never read, "Well done, good and faithful servant," &c.; "For I was hungry and ye fed me," &c.

Nor Heb. v. 9. "He is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him;" or Heb. xiii., "With such sacrifice, God is well pleased;" or, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous;" or, "That we shall be judged according to our works;" or Rev. xxii. 14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city;" or Gal. vi. 7, 8, "What a man soweth, that shall he reap. He that soweth to the Spirit, of the Spirit shall reap everlasting life:" with many such.

No man well in his wits can think that any thing we do can merit of God in commutative justice, as if he received any thing from us. This were even to deny God to be God. But are we not under a law of grace, and doth not that law command us obedience, and the improvement of our talents in doing good? And shall we not be judged by that law? And what is judging, but justifying or condemning? No works of ours can stand the trial by the law of innocency or works, but only the perfect righteousness of Christ. But he that is accused of final impenitency, infidelity, hypocrisy, or unholiness, if truly accused, shall never be justified, and if falsely, must be justified against that charge by somewhat besides what is done out of him by Jesus Christ.

It is an easier thing to be zealous for an opinion, which is sound, or supposed such, about works and grace, than to be zealous of good works, or zealously desirous of grace. How sad use did Satan make of men's zeal for orthodox words, when the Nestorian, Eutychian, and Monothelite controversies were in agitation! He went for a hollow-hearted neuter that did not hereticate one side or other. And I would that factious, ignorant zeal were not still alive in the churches. How many have we heard on one side reviling lutherans, calvinists, arminians, episcopals, presbyterians, independents, &c., to render them odious, that never understand the true state of the difference. And how fiercely do some papists and others cry down solifidians, and persuade men that we are enemies to good works, or think that they are not necessary to salvation, (because some rashly maintained that in a faction against George Major, long ago,) or at least that they are no further necessary, but as signs to prove that which

God knoweth without them. And, on the other side, how many make themselves and others believe that the true expositors of **Saint James's** words are almost papists, and teach men dangerously to trust to works for their justification, while they understand not what either of the apostles mean by justification, faith, or works. Many so carefully avoid trusting to good works, that they have none or few to trust to. No doubt nothing of man must be trusted to for the least part that belongs to Christ, but all duty and means must be both used and trusted for its own part.

Consider well these following motives, and you will see why all Christians must be zealous of doing all the good they can.

1. It rendereth a man likest to God, to be good, and to do good: or which account Christ requireth it even towards our enemies, (*Matt. v.*) that we may be perfect, as our **Heavenly Father** is perfect, who doth good even to the unjust. And he that is likest God, is the best man, most holy, and most happy, and shall have most communion with God.

2. And when Christ came down in flesh to call man home by making God better known to the world, he revealed him in his attractive goodness, and that was by his own beneficence to man. He came to do the greatest good; to be the Savior of the world, and to reconcile revolted man to God; and all his life, yea, his death and heavenly intercession, is doing good to those that were God's enemies. And to learn of Christ, and imitate his example, is to be his true disciples. And what else do his laws command us? They are *lovely, just, and good*; and our goodness is to love them, and obey them. By keeping these we must show that we are his disciples. When he tells you who you must do good to, in the instance of the Samaritan, he addeth, "Go thou and do likewise." He largely tells us of what importance it is for every branch that is planted into him to bring forth fruit. (*John xv.*)

3. It is much of the end of all sanctifying operations of the **Holy Spirit**. Grace is given us to use; even natural powers are given us for action. What the better were man for a tongue, or hands, or feet, if he should never use them? Life is a principle of action. It were as good have no life, as not to use it. And why doth God



make men good, but that they may do good, even in their duty to God, themselves, and one another?

4. And it is God's great mercy to mankind, that he will use us all in doing good to one another; and it is a great part of his wise government of the world, that in societies men should be tied to it by the sense of every particular man's necessity; and it is a great honor to those that he maketh his almoners, or servants, to convey his gifts to others; God bids you give nothing but what is his, and no otherwise your own but as his stewards. It is his bounty, and your service or stewardship, which is to be exercised. He could have done good to all men by himself alone, without you or any other, if he would; but he will honor his servants to be the messengers of his bounty. You best please him when you readily receive his gifts yourselves, and most fully communicate them to others. To do good, is to receive good; and yet he will reward such for doing and receiving.

5. Self-love, therefore, should persuade men to do good to all. You are not the least gainers by it yourselves. If you can trust Christ, sure you will think this profitable usury. Is not a cup of cold water well paid for, when Christ performs his promise? And is it not a gainful loss which is rewarded in this life an hundred fold, and in the world to come, with life eternal?

Those that live in the fullest exercise of love, and doing good, are usually most loved, and many are ready to do good to them. And this exercise increaseth all fruitful graces: and there is a present delight in doing good, which is itself a great reward. The love of others makes it delightful to us: and the pleasing of God, and the imitation of Christ, and the testimony of conscience, make it delightful. An honest physician is far gladder to save men's lives or health, than to get their money. And an honest soldier is gladder to save his country, than to get his pay. Every honest minister of Christ is far gladder to win souls, than to get money or preferment. The believing giver hath more pleasure than the receiver; and this without any conceit of commutative meriting of God, or any false trust to works for justification.

6. Stewards must give account of all. What would you wish were the matter of your true account, if death or judgment were to-

morrow? Would you not wish you had done all the good you could? Do you believe that all shall be judged according to their works? Did you ever well study that great prediction of Christ? Matt. xxv.

And it is some part of a reward on earth, that men that do much good, especially that to whole nations, are usually honored by posterity, however they be rewarded by the present age.

7. Every true Christian is absolutely devoted to do good. What else is to be devoted to God, our Creator and Redeemer? What live we for, or what should we desire to live for, but to do good?

But this exhortation is especially applicable to them that have special opportunity.

i. Magistrates are the capitals in the societies and public affairs of mankind. They are placed highest that they may have an universal influence. Though it be too high a word to call them gods, or God's vicegerents, (unless *secundum quid*,) yet they are his officers and regent ministers; but it is for the common good. In them God shows what order can do in the government of the world. As the placing the same figure before many, doth accordingly advance its value in signification, so it is a wonder to note what the place of one man signifieth at the head of an army, of a city, of a kingdom. They are appointed by God to govern men in a just subordination to God's government, and not otherwise. To promote obedience to God's laws by theirs, and by their judgment and execution to give men a foretaste what they may at last expect from God: and by their rewards and punishments to foretel men whom God will reward and punish: and by their own examples to show the subjects how temperately, and soberly, and godly, God would have them live. Atheists can see and fear a magistrate, that fear not God because they know him not.

They that prefer those as the most worthy of honor whom God abhorreth for their wickedness, and hate and oppress those whom God will honor, do show themselves enemies to him that giveth them all their power. And they that by countenance or practice do teach men to despise the fear of God, and to make light of drunkenness, whoredom, lying, perjury, and such like odious crimes, do, in a sort, blaspheme God himself, as if he who exalted them were a lover of

sin, and a hater of his own laws and service. There are few rulers that are unwilling of power, or to be accounted great; and do they not know, that it is a power to do good that God has given them; and that obligation to do it is as essential to their office as authority? And that they who govern as the officers of God, and pretend to be liker him in greatness than their subjects, must also be liker to him in wisdom and goodness.

Wo to that man who abuseth and opposeth the just and faithful in the name of God, and by pretence of authority from him to do it! Wo to him that in God's name, and as by his authority, countenanceth the wicked whom God abhorreth, and under Christ's banner fighteth against him! As Christ saith of the offensive, "It were good for that man that he had never been born." "He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse; nations shall abhor him." (Prov. xxiv. 24.) "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord." (Prov. xvii. 15.)

God looketh for great service from great men; great trust and talents must have great account; a prince, a lord, a ruler, must do much more good, in promoting piety, conscience, virtue than the best inferiors; to whom men give much, from them they expect the more.

It greatly concerneth such men seriously to ask their conscience, Can I do no more to encourage godliness, conscience, and justice, and to disgrace malignity, brutish sensuality, and fleshly lusts, than I have done? O when they must hear "Give account of thy stewardship, thou shalt be no longer steward," little think many rulers what an account it is that will be required of them! O what a deal of good may the rulers of the earth do, if, instead of over-minding their partial interests, and serving the desires of the flesh, they did but set themselves with study and resolution to promote the common good, by disgracing sin, and encouraging wisdom, piety, and peace! And where this is not sincerely done, as surely as there is a righteous God, and a future judgment, they shall pay for their omisive treachery. And if Satan do prevail to set his own captains over the armies of the Lord, to betray them to perdition, they shall be deepest in misery, as they were in guilt. One would think the great delight

that is to be found in doing good to all, should much more draw men to desire authority and greatness, than either riches, or voluptuousness, or a domineering desire that all men should fulfil their wills.

ii. The ministers of Christ also have the next opportunity to do good to many ; and it is a debt that by many and great obligations they owe to Christ and men. But it will not be done without labor, and condescension, and unwearied patience. It is undertaken by all that are ordained to this office, but O that it were performed faithfully by all ! What a doleful life would the perfidious soul-betrayers live if they knew what a guilt they have to answer for !—even the contempt of the people's souls, and of the blood of Christ that purchased them ! O hear that vehement adjuration, (2. Tim. iv. 1, 2.) “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom, preach the word ; be instant, in season and out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine.” Speak with holy studied skill ; speak with love and melting pity ; speak with importunity ; take no denial ; speak as St. Paul, (Acts xx.,) publicly, and from house to house ; speak before you are silenced in the dust ; speak before death have taken away your hearers. It is for souls, it is for Christ, it is for yourselves too : while you have opportunity do good to all. But of this I have formerly said more in my ‘Reformed Pastor.’

iii. And let all men take their common and special opportunities to do good : time will not stay ; yourselves, your wives, your children, your servants, your neighbors, are posting to another world ; speak now what you would have them hear ; do them now all the good you can. It must be now or never ; there is no returning from the dead to warn them. O live not as those infidels, who think it enough to do no harm, and to serve their carnal minds with pleasure, as born for nothing but a decent and delightful life on earth. You are all in the vineyard or harvest of the Lord ; work while it is day, the night is at hand when none can work ; wo to the slothful, treacherous hypocrite when the judgment cometh !

Stay not till you are entreated to do good ; study it, and seek it. Give while there are men that need, and while you have it, especially

to the household of faith. Fire and thieves may deprive you of it ; at the furtherest, death will quickly do it. Happy are they that know their day, and, trusting in Christ, do study to serve him in doing good to all.

And the doctrine in hand doth further teach us some consecrations which all do not well consider.

I. That living chiefly to the flesh in worldly prosperity, and dropping now and then some small good on the by, to quiet conscience, is the property of an hypocrite. But to sound Christians, fruitfulness in doing good is the very trade of their lives, of which they are zealous, and which they daily study.

II. That all Christians should be very careful to avoid doing public hurt. It woundeth conscience to be guilty of wronging of any *one* man, we find it in dying men, that cannot die in peace till they have confessed wrongs, and made satisfaction, and asked forgiveness. And who knoweth but the many apparitions that have certainly been on such occasions may be done by miserable souls, to seek some ease of the torment of their own consciences? But to hurt many, even whole parishes, cities, churches, kingdoms, how much more grievous will it prove! And yet, alas! how quickly may it be done: and how ordinarily is it done. What grievous mischief may even well-meaning men do by one mistaken practice, or rash act. By the fierce promoting one error; by letting loose one passion, or carnal affection; by venturing once on secret sin; yea, by one rash, sinful word. How much more if they are drawn and set in an unlawful interest and way. And little know we when a spark is kindled how it will end, or how many ways Satan hath to improve it. And one hurtful action, or unwarrantable way, may blast abundance of excellent endowments, and make such a grievous damage to the church, who else might have been an eminent blessing. And if good men may do so much hurt, what have the enemies of godliness to answer for, who, by worldliness and malignity, are corrupters, dividers, and destroyers?

III. The text plainly intimateth that it is a great crime in them that instead of doing good while they have opportunity, think it enough to leave it by will to their executors to do it. When they

have lived to the flesh, and cannot take it with them, they think it enough to leave others to do that good which they had not a heart to do themselves ; but a treasure must be laid up in heaven beforehand, and not be left to be sent after ; (Matt. vi. 20, 21 ;) and he that will make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness must now be rich towards God. (Luke xii. 21.) It is no victory over the world to leave it when you cannot keep it ; nor will any legacy purchase heaven for an unholy, worldly soul.

IV. Yet they that will do good neither living nor dying are worst of all. Surely the last acts of our lives, if possible, should be the best ; and as we must live in health, so also in sickness, and to the last, in doing all the good we can ; and, therefore, it must needs be a great sin to leave our estates to those that are like to do hurt with them, or to do no good, so far as we are the free disposers of them.

The case, I confess, is not without considerable difficulties, how much a man is bound to leave to his children, or his nearest kindred, when some of them are disposed to live unprofitably, and some to live ungodlily and hurtfully. Some think men are bound to leave them nothing ; some think they ought to leave them almost all ; and some think that they should leave them only so much as may find them tolerable food and raiment. I shall do my best to decide the case in several propositions.

1. The case is not with us as it was with the Israelites, who might not alienate their inheritances from the tribes ; yet even they had power to prefer a younger son, that was more deserving, before an elder, that was worse.

2. Where either law or contract have disabled a man to alienate his estate from an ungodly heir, there is no room for a doubt what he must do.

3. Nature teacheth all men to prefer a child that is pious and hopeful in his provisions, and legacies, before a stranger that is somewhat better, and not to alienate his estate for want of a higher degree of goodness.

4. When there is just cause to disinherit an elder son, a younger is to be preferred before a stranger ; or a kinsman, if there be no tolerable son.

5. And a son that ought not to be trusted with riches, or a great estate, yet ought to have food and raiment; (unless he come to that state of obstinate rebellion in sin, for which God's law commanded the Israelites to bring forth their sons to be put to death; in such cases the house of correction is fittest for them;) yet should he have such food as may humble him, and not to gratify his lust.

6. If a man that hath the full power to dispose of his estate, real or personal, have sons and kindred, that, according to the judgment of sound reason, are like, if they had this estate, to do mischief with it, or maintain them in a wicked life, or in a mere unprofitable life of idleness, living only to themselves, and fleshly ease and pleasure, that man ought to give his estate from such to some that are more likely to do good with it, and to use it for God, and the public benefit.

This is much contrary to the common course of most, that think no estate too great for their heirs, nor any portion too great for their daughters, be they what they will, or what use soever they are like to make of it: but these following reasons prove it to be true.

Reason 1. Every man hath his estate from God, and for God, and is bound, as his steward, accordingly to use it. This is past doubt; and how doth that man use it for God, who leaveth it to one that is likely to use it for the devil, in a fleshly, unprofitable life? What account can such a steward give? Did God give it you to maintain idleness and sin?

Objection. O, but it is a son whom I am bound to provide for.

Answer. Are you more bound to your son than to yourself? God doth not allow you to spend it on yourself, to maintain idleness and vice. (Rom. xiii. 13, 14.) "Make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lust (or will) thereof." And may you leave it for such a use as is forbidden both your son and you? It is God that is the owner of it, and it is to him that you must both use and leave it: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." And will you leave it to be the fuel of lust and sin?

Obj. I leave it not for sin; but if he misuse it I cannot help it.

Ans. Would that excuse you if you put a sword into a madman's hand to say, I cannot help it if he use it ill? You might have helped it; it is supposed that you foreknew how he was like to use it.

Obj. But he may prove better hereafter, as some do. *Ans.* It is not bare possibilities that must guide a wise man's actions when probability is against them. Would you commit your children to the care of a madman, or a knave, because he may possibly come to his wits, or become honest? Have you not long tried him, and have you not endeavored to cure him of his idleness, wickedness, or lust? If it be not done, what ground have you to presume it will be done when you are dead? You may have so much hope as not utterly to despair of him, but that will not allow you to trust him with that which God made you steward of for his use and service.

But if such hopes may be gratified, give your estate in trust to some conscionable friend, with secret order to give it your son, or kinsman, if he become hereafter fit to use it according to the ends for which God giveth it.

Reas. 2. The obligation in my text of doing good to all, extendeth to the end of our lives, and, therefore, to our last will and testament. Therefore, you must make your wills so as may do good to all, and not to cherish sin and idleness.

Reas. 3. You are bound to your best to destroy sin and idleness, and, therefore, not to feed and cherish it.

Reas. 4. Doing good is the very thing which you are created, redeemed, and sanctified for; and, therefore, you must extend your endeavors to the utmost, and to the last, that as much as may be, may be done when you are dead. If magistrates and ministers took care for no longer than their own lives, what would become of the state or church.

Reas. 5. The common good is better than the plenty of a sinful child; yea, it is to be preferred before the best child, and before ourselves, and, therefore, much more before the worst.

Reas. 6. It is a dreadful thing to be guilty of all the fleshly sins which your ungodly sons will commit with your estate, when they shall by it maintain the sins of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness, if not to strengthen their hands for oppression or persecution, to think that they will spend their days in voluptuousness, because you give them provision for the flesh.

Reas. 7. It is cruelty to them that are already so bad, to make their temptations to sin much stronger, and their place in hell the worse, and to make the way to heaven as hard to them as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle; to prepare them to want a drop of water in hell, who were clothed richly, and fared sumptuously on earth; to entice them to say, 'Soul, take thine ease, thou has enough laid up for many years,' till they hear, 'Thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul;' to cherish that love of the world which is enmity to God, by feeding that lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and pride of life, which are not of the Father, but of the world.

Reas. 8. When this preferring unprofitable and ungodly children before God and the common good is so common and reigning a sin in the world, it is a great fault for religious men to encourage them in it by their example, and to do as they.

Reas. 9. It is a sin to cast away any of God's gifts. When Christ had fed men by a miracle, he saith, "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost:" if you should cast your money into the sea, it were a crime; but to leave to such as you foresee are most likely to use it sinfully is more than casting it away.

If you saw men offer sacrifice to Bacchus, or Venus, you would abhor it: do not that which is so like it, as to leave bad men fuel for fleshly lust.

Reas. 10. It is the more dreadful, because it is dying in studied sin, without repentance. To put so much sin into one's will, shows a full consent, and leaveth no room and time to repent of it.

On all these accounts, I advise all the stewards of God, as they love him, and the public good, and their own souls, while they have opportunity, even to the last breath, to do good to all, and to provide more for the common good than for superfluities to any, and than for the maintaining ungodly children in sin, to the increase of their guilt and misery.

Indeed, in the choice of a calling, employment and condition of life, and place for their children, doing good should be preferred before their rising in the world: and they that justly endeavor to raise their families in wealth, honor, or power, should do it only that they

might do the more good. But it is Satan's design to turn all God's mercies to the cherishing of wickedness, and even the love of parents to their children to the poisoning of their souls, the strengthening of their snares, and the hinderance of their own and other men's salvation. But it is shame and pity that they who in baptism devoted their children to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil, as under the banner of the cross, should labor all their life, that impenitently at death they may leave all that they can get to such as, in all probability, will use it in pride, fulness, and idleness, for the flesh, the world, and the devil, against him and his interest, from whom they received it; and to whom both they and all they had were once devoted.

When men are loth that their estates should remove from the name and family, (for which there may be just cause,) I take it for the safest way, as aforesaid, to trust some, as men do their children with guardians, by the advice of lawyers, to secure all from their unworthy heirs, for the next, or some other of the name and lineage, that proveth worthy.

There are many other good works by which some rich men may be very profitable to the commonwealth, such as setting all the poor on work, and building hospitals for the impotent, &c.; but these this city is happily acquainted with already; and though still there be much wanting, yet there is much done.

V. But one more I will presume to name only to you that are merchants, for I am not one who have the ear of princes, who are more able. Might not somewhat more be done than yet is, to further the gospel in your factories, and in our plantations. Old Mr. Eliot, with his helpers in New England, hath shown that somewhat may be done, if others were as charitable and zealous as they. The jesuits and friars showed us, in Congo, Japan, China, and other countries that much might be done with care and diligence. Though the papal interest was a corrupt end, and all the means which they used were not justifiable, when I read of their hazards, unwearied labors, and success, I am none of those that would deprive them of their deserved honor, but rather wish that we who have better ends and principles, might do better than they, and not come so far behind

them as we do, if half be true that Peter Maffæus, and the jesuits' epistles, and many other writers, tell us of them. I know that they had the advantage of greater helps from kings, and pope, and prelates, and colleges endowed with trained men and copious maintenance. But might not somewhat more be done by us than is yet done?

1. Is it not possible to send some able, zealous chaplains to those factories which are in the countries of infidels and heathens; such as thirst for the conversion of sinners, and the enlargement of the church of Christ, and would labor skillfully and diligently therein? Is it not possible to get some short christian books, which are fitted for that use, to be translated into such languages that infidels can read, and to distribute them among them? If it be not possible also to send thither religious, conacionable factors, who would further the work, the case of London is very sad.

2. Is it not possible, at least, to help the poor ignorant Armenians, Greeks, Muscovites, and other Christians, who have no printing among them, nor much preaching or knowledge; and, for want of printing, have very few Bibles, even for their churches or ministers? Could nothing be done to get some Bibles, catechisms, and practical books printed in their own tongues, and given among them? I know there is difficulty in the way; but money, and willingness, and diligence, might do something.

3. Might not something be done in other plantations, as well as in New England, towards the conversion of the natives there? Might not some skilful, zealous preachers be sent thither, who would promote serious piety among those of the English that have too little of it, and might invite the Americans to learn the gospel, and teach our planters how to behave themselves christianly towards them, to win them to Christ?

4. Is it not possible to do more than hath been done to convert the blacks that are our own slaves, or servants, to the christian faith? Hath not Mr. Goodwin justly reprehended and lamented the neglect, yea, and resistance of this work in Barbadoes, and the like elsewhere? 1. Might not better teachers be sent thither for that use? 2. Is it not an odious crime of Christians to hinder the conversion of these in-

fidels, lest they lose their service by it, and to prefer their gain to men's souls? Is not this to sell souls for a little money, as Judas did his Lord! And whereas the law manumits them from servitude when they turn Christians, that it may invite them to conversion, (and this occasioneth wicked Christians to hinder them from knowledge,) were it not better move the government, therefore, to change that law, so far as to allow these covetous masters their service for a certain time, using them as free servants? 3. And whereas they are allowed only the Lord's Day for their own labor, and some honest Christians would willingly allow them some other time instead of it, that they might spend the Lord's day in learning to know Christ, and worship God, but they dare not do it, lest their wicked neighbors rise against them, for giving their slaves such an example; might not the governors be procured to force the whole plantation to it by a law, even to allow their infidel servants so much time on another day, and cause some to congregate them for instruction on the Lord's days? Why should those men be called Christians, or have any christian reputation, or privilege themselves, who think both Christianity and souls to be no more worth than to be thus basely sold for the gain of men's servilest labors? And what, though the poor infidels desire not their own conversion, their need is the greater, and not the less.

VI. I conclude with this moving inference: The great opposition that is made against doing good by the devil and his whole army through all the world, and their lamentable success, doth call aloud to all true Christians to over-do them. O what a kingdom of malignants hath Satan, doing mischief to men's souls and bodies through the earth! hating the godly; oppressing the just; corrupting doctrine; introducing lies; turning Christ's laborers out of his vineyard; forbidding them to preach in his name the saving word of life; hiding or despising the laws of Christ, and setting up their own wills and devices in their stead; making dividing, distracting engines, on pretence of order, government and unity; murdering men's bodies, and ruining their estates, and slandering their names, on pretence of love to the church and souls; encouraging profaneness, blasphemy, perjury, whoredom, and scorning conscience, and fear of sinning. What diligence doth Satan use through the very christian nations, to turn



Christ's ordinances of magistracy and ministry against himself, and to make his own officers the most mischievous enemies to his truth and kingdom, and saving work ; to tread down his family and spiritual worship, as if it were by his own authority and commission. To preach down truth, and conscience, and real godliness, as in Christ's own name, and fight against him with his own word, and to teach the people to hate his servants, as if this pleased the God of love.

And, alas ! how dismal is their success ! In the East, the church is hereby destroyed by the barbarous Mahometans : the remnants by their prelates continued in sects, in great ignorance, and dead formality, reproaching and anathematizing one another, and little hope appearing of recovery. In the West, a dead image of religion, and unity, and order, dressed up with a multitude of gauds, and set up against the life and soul of religion, unity and order, and a war here-upon maintained for their destruction, with sad success : so that, usually, the more zealous men are for the papal and formal human image, the more zealously they study the extirpation of worshipping God in spirit and truth, and thirst after the blood of the most serious worshippers ; and cry down them as intolerable enemies who take their baptism for an obliging vow, and seriously endeavor to perform it, and live in good earnest, as Christianity bindeth them : and they take it for an insufferable crime to prefer God's authority before man's, and to plead his law against any thing that men command them. In a word, he is unworthy to be accounted a Christian with them, who will be a Christian indeed, and not despise the laws of Christ, and unworthy to have the liberty and usage of a man that will not sin and damn his soul : so much more cruel are they than the Turkish tyrants, who, if they send to a man for his head, must be obeyed.

And is the devil a better master than Christ ? And shall his work be done with greater zeal and resolution ? Will he give his servants a better reward ? Should not all this awaken us to do good with greater diligence, than they do evil ? And to promote love and piety more earnestly than they do malignity and iniquity ! Is not saving church and state, souls and bodies, better worth resolution and labor than destroying them ?

And the prognostics are encouraging. Certainly, Christ and his kingdom will prevail. At last, all his enemies shall be made his footstool; yea, shall from him receive their doom to everlasting punishment which rebels against omnipotency, goodness and mercy, do deserve. If God be not God, if Christ will not conquer, if there be no life to come, let them boast of their success: but when they are rottenness, and dust, and their souls with devils, and their names are reproach, Christ will be Christ, his promises and threatenings all made good. (2 Thess. i. 6, &c.) He will judge it righteous to recompense tribulation to your troublers, when he cometh with his mighty angels in flaming fire, to take vengeance on rebels, and to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all true believers. And when that solemn judgment shall pass on them that did good, and that did evil, described Matt. xxv., with a "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom," and "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," doing good and not doing it, much more doing mischief, will be better distinguished than now they are, when they are rendered as the reason of those different dooms.



GOD'S GOODNESS VINDICATED;

FOR THE

HELP OF SUCH (ESPECIALLY IN MELANCHOLY)

AS ARE

TEMPTED TO DENY IT, AND THINK HIM TO BE CRUEL,

BECAUSE OF THE

PRESENT AND FUTURE MISERY OF MANKIND;


WITH RESPECT TO THE

DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION AND DAMNATION.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

How much the glory of God and the salvation of men is concerned in the right understanding of his goodness, in all his ways and counsels towards them, is evidently seen by all that have any true notion of the Divine Excellency and man's felicity. God's goodness is his most solemnly proclaimed name and glory. It is his goodness duly known, that leads sinners to repentance, and unites their hearts to fear his name, and excites, and forever terminates that love which is our holiness and happiness to eternity. It is also too well known, how much this amiable Divine Goodness is denied or doubted of. What cavils are raised against it by men of corrupt minds! What secret prejudice lies against it, and how deeply rooted in our depraved nature! Yea, with how fearful suggestions and apprehensions are some godly Christians (especially those that lie in the darkness of melancholy) sometimes perplexed about it! And even such as are grounded and settled in it, are liable to be assaulted, and may sometimes stagger and stumble at it. And indeed, though the kindness of God towards men hath appeared in the world, as visible as the sun in the firmament; yet man's darkened understanding, and his connate sensuality and selfishness, taking occasion from the more mysterious parts of providence, and those especially that most contradict the wisdom and interest of the flesh, hath caused disputes, and raised doubts, against the truth of that which is in itself as clear and sure as that there is a God or a world, or any thing existent. Whereupon this author was earnestly desired by a friend, to collect some principles in a narrow compass, that might silence cavers, succor the tempted, and confirm the sound mind. And for these ends they are, with his permission, by his friend made public; Hosea xiv. 9. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein."

April 27, 1671.



GOD'S GOODNESS VINDICATED.

To help all such persons out of the snare of this dangerous and troublesome temptation, as are described in the propounded case, we must have respect, I. To the special case of the melancholy, who are more liable than others to such disturbances. II. To the common cause of their trouble and perplexity, as it consisteth in such opinions as you describe.

I. With the melancholy, the greatest difficulty lieth in making them capable to receive plain truths : for it will work, not as it is, but as it is received. And melancholy doth breed and feed such kind of thoughts, as naturally as a dead carcase feedeth vermin. Of forty or fifty melancholy persons that I have to deal with, there are scarce four that are not hurried with suggestions to blasphemous thoughts against God and the Sacred Scriptures ; and scarce two that are not under dismal apprehensions that they are miserable, undone creatures, (except only some that are all carried to conceits of prophecies, revelations, and some rare, exalting communications of light unto themselves.) This unhappy disease of melancholy is first seated in the organs of imagination and passion both ; that is, in the spirits, and thereby in the very imagining faculty itself : though the natural parts being without pain or sickness, they will not believe that it is a disease at all. It inclineth them usually to solitariness, to musing, and to dismal thoughts, that they are undone, graceless, hopeless, &c., which because they passionately seem to feel, no words, which silence them, will satisfy them ; or if you seem a little to satisfy them to-day, it is all gone to morrow : for a melancholy man is like the eye that looketh on all things through a colored glass, or in an ophthalmy, and seeth them according to the medium.

The disease, in some few, beginneth with over-stretching thoughts and troubles about things spiritual ; but in most that I have met with,

(ten to one,) it beginneth with some worldly cross, loss, or trouble, which grieveth them, and casteth them into troublesome anxieties and cares; and then when by these the spirits are diseased, it presently turneth upon conscience; first, against themselves, aggravating sin and misery, apprehending calamity from every thing which they see, hear, or think of; and next, against God and Scripture, perplexed in every thing that cometh before them, and quarreling with all, and offended in all; and usually they are importuned, as if it were by something else within them, to say some blasphemous word against God, or do some mischief against themselves: no doubt through Satan's special instigation, who can work on men according to the advantage of their bodily and sensitive distempers, and can do that on a melancholy man, (though a godly man,) which he cannot do on another; as he can also work on the choleric, phlegmatic, &c. according to their temper.

1. The cure of this must be by these means; (1.) You must not suffer them to be much alone. (2.) You must divert them from all musing, and turn it to discourse. (3.) You must keep from them displeasing things and persons, and help them to suitable, pleasing company and converse. (4.) You must change their air and company sometimes, that strange objects may change their imagination. (5.) Above all, if they have strength, you must not suffer them to be idle, to lie in bed longer than they sleep in the day: nor to sit musing, but must get them upon the work of a lawful calling, and drive them on to so much diligence, that body and mind may be closely employed. This will be more than all other ordinary means. (6.) In most, meet physic also will do very much, which must be ordered by an experienced physician that is with them, or well knoweth them. (7.) Lastly, Their false thoughts also must be confuted, and their minds have due satisfaction. And if you cannot have all, or most of these done, you can hardly expect a cure, unless time wear it off, which is doubtful.

II. The falsehood and vexation of such men's thoughts, whether the melancholy or others, are brought to pass, 1. By a false method of reasoning. II. By false opinions which they have before received. 1. It is a grossly deluding and subverting way of reasoning, to be-

gin at dark and doubtful consequents, thence to argue against certain, clear, fundamental principles. As if from some doubts about the position and motion of the stars, or of the nature of light, heat, and motion, men should argue that there is no sun, or moon, or stars at all ; or that they have no power of light, heat, or motion : or as if from the many difficulties in anatomy, about the circulation of the blood, the 'oleum nervosum,' the 'lymphæ,' and its vessels, the passages and the 'succus' of the pancreas and gall, the transcolation through the intestines into the 'venæ lacteæ,' the chyly glandules, and such like, one should arise to a conclusion, that there is no blood, no chyle, no veins, no glandules, no head, no body ; or from the controversy, whether the heart be a mere muscle without any proper 'parenchymæ,' one should grow to conclude that there is no heart : so such persons, from points beyond man's reach, about God's decrees and intentions, and the mysteries of providence, conclude or doubt against God's goodness ; that is, whether indeed there be a God. I have spoken so fully to this case in my "Reasons of the Christian Religion," chapter iv. that I would desire you to peruse it. I shall now only give you twenty questions which the tempted person may challenge all the subtlety and malice of hell to answer ; for it is easy to justify the goodness of God.

Quest. 1. 'Is it not certain that there is a world, in which is abundance of created goodness?' The earth is but a point as to all the world. There is a sun, and moon, and multitudes of glorious stars, which are many of them manifold greater than the earth. There are angels, there are men, there are variety of creatures in this lower part of the creation, which have all their excellency ; all the men on earth cannot by any contribution of their counsels, discern the ten thousandth part of the excellency of this little parcel of God's works. And as to the whole, it is next to nothing which we comprehend : every worm, every plant excelleth the highest human apprehension. Is there no physical goodness in all this unmeasurable, this harmonious, this glorious frame ? Look about you, look upwards, and deny it if you can. And is there no moral goodness in holy men and angels ? And is there no felicity and glorious goodness in all the heavens ? What mind can be so black, as to deny all created goodness ?

Quest. 2. 'Is not all the goodness of the whole creation communicated from God?' Did it make itself? Or who else made it? Are not all effects from their causes? And is he not the first cause? See what I have said to prove this fully in the aforesaid Treatise.

Quest. 3. 'Hath God made a world that is better than himself?' Could he give more goodness than he had to give? Must not he needs be better than all his works?

Quest. 4. 'Is he fit to be quarreled with for want of goodness, who hath infinitely more goodness than the whole world besides?' More than sun and stars, heaven and earth, angels and men, all set together in all their single and their united, harmonious worth? If he be better than all, is he not most beyond accusation or exception?

Quest. 5. 'Must not God necessarily excel his works? Must he needs make every worm a god? Or must he make any god, or equal to himself?' Is not that a contradiction? And is there not necessarily an imperfection in all that is not God? Nothing can be so great, so wise, so good, so holy, so immutable, so self-sufficient, so blessed, as God.

Quest. 6. 'Is not God's creation a harmonious universe, of which individuals are but the parts?' Are not the parts for the whole, and their worth to be valued for the whole, or for the common ends? Must every pin in a watch, or every stitch in your garment, or every part of your house, or every member of your body, and every humor or excrement in it, have that excellency which may simply dignify itself in a compared or separated sense? Or rather, must it not have that excellency which belongeth to it as a part of the whole for the common end of all together? Is not that best, that is best to the order, beauty, and usefulness of the universal frame?

Quest. 7. 'Is it necessary to this end, or to prove God's goodness, that all individuals, or species of creatures must be of the highest rank or excellency?' Is God wanting in goodness, if every man be not an angel, or every angel made unchangeable, or every unlearned man a doctor, or every star a sun, or every cloud or clod a star, or every beast a man, or every worm an elephant, or every weed a rose, or every member a heart or head, or every excrement blood and spirits? Will you think that a man doth reason like a man, who thus

disputeth, 'He that doth not do that which is best when he can do it, is not perfectly good, and therefore is not God. But he that maketh toads and serpents, and maketh the guts the passage of filthy excrements, when he could have made them equal with the heart, doth not do that which is best, when he can do it. Therefore he is not perfectly good; therefore he is not God: therefore there is no God; therefore there is no Creator; therefore the world hath no cause, or made itself, and preserveth itself. Therefore I made myself, and must rule and preserve myself.' Conclude next, 'Therefore I will never suffer, nor die,' and thus prove the wisdom of such reasoning, if you can.

Quest. 8. If God made man and all things, 'did he not make them for himself, for the pleasure of his own will? Must he not needs in reason be the end of all, who is the beginning and cause of all?' And is not that means the best which is aptest to the end? And doth not the proper goodness of a means consist in its aptitude to promote the end? And then is not that the goodness of all creatures (partly to be what the Creator efficiently maketh them, and partly) to fulfil his will. And what creature hath not this goodness, as to the absolute will of his decrees, which all fulfil?

Quest. 9. 'Are not now both these conclusions of infallible certainty, and therefore not at all contradictory?' 1. That God is most good, because he is the cause of all the good in the whole creation? 2. And yet that there are toads, serpents, darkness, death, sickness, pains, &c. which therefore are no whit inconsistent with his goodness? Neither of them being capable of a denial, or of a sober doubt.

Quest. 10. 'Is not an angel and man, endued with reason and freewill, and left to choose or refuse his own rectitude and felicity (or misery,) capable of knowing, loving, serving, and enjoying God, if he will, and instructed by a perfect holy law (with rewards and punishments,) to choose aright;—I say, is not such a creature as noble and as meet for God to make as a stone, or a toad, or worm, or serpent?' If God choose to please his own holy will, by making a world of such intellectual, free agents, whom he will (ordinarily) rule by the way of moral laws and motives; is this any disparagement to his wisdom and goodness? It is true, that such a mutable freewill is

below a confirmed, immutable will. But it is as true, that a toad is below a man ; and that infinite wisdom thought not meet to make all his creatures of one rank or size, nor to make all faces alike, nor all the stones in the street alike, but in wonderful variety. It is not then unbecoming God to make a world of rational free-agents, under such a moral government by laws.

Quest. 11. If all these free-agents have abused their liberty and undone themselves, if he so far show mercy to them all, as that they may be all happy if they will, and none of them shall perish but for wilful and final refusing of the saving means and mercy which is offered to them ; and if they will, they may live with God himself, and Christ, and angels in endless glory ; and none shall lose this free-given felicity, but for final refusal and contempt, preferring certain vanity and dung before it ; and if officers be commissioned, and means provided, to acquaint all, in several measures, with the reasons why they should choose heaven and holiness before the dirty pleasures of sin, and to importune them daily to such a choice ; and if a life of mercies be granted to allure them, and afflictions to drive them, and examples to invite them to choose aright ;—I say, after all this, ‘have any of these persons cause to complain, that God dealeth not mercifully with them ?’ Shall they, that will not accept of life and mercy offered them, accuse him as cruel that importuneth them to accept it ?

Quest. 12. ‘Is the goodness of a king to be judged of by the interest of murderers in the gaol ;’ when he restrained them by laws ; when he warned them by legal penalties ; when he encourageth and protecteth all the good ; when the lives of the innocent need this severity against the wicked ; when the commonwealth would take him to be bad, that would not restrain thieves and murderers by penalties. Yea, though this king could, if he would, have set constant guard on these men to have kept these men from murdering, but he thinketh meet only to govern them by laws ; will you rather argue, that the gaol is a place of misery, therefore the king is cruel, than, the rest of the kingdom flourish in prosperity and peace, therefore the king is wise and gracious. And is not this little dirty spot of earth, the next door to hell, a place defiled by wilful sin, and unfit to be the index of God’s benignity, from whence we should take an estimate of it ?

Quest. 13. 'Do not all men in the world confess God's goodness first or last?' Do not all true believers, that are themselves, acknowledge that he is infinitely good, and good to them, and that his mercy is over all his works, and endureth for ever? And do not the consciences of the damned grind and tear them for the contempt of goodness, and setting against mercy, even mercy to themselves? This is the fuel that feedeth hell, not by way of delusion, but experimental conviction. If the man that doubteth of God's goodness and mercy to him, do despair, or fear damnation, he foolishly contradicteth himself. For hell and damnation is a state of misery and torment, in the loss, and in the conscience and sense, of refused and abused mercy. If therefore God be not merciful to you, then you need not fear being damned for sinning against and refusing mercy. For that which is not, cannot be sinned against, or abused. If God be merciful, you may be saved if you will accept this mercy; if he be not, you cannot in justice be damned for rejecting that mercy which was none. And if God be not merciful and just, he is not God. And if there be no God, there is none to damn you. But all confess, in heaven and hell, some with joy, and some with self-tormenting anguish, that God was inconceivably good and merciful.

Quest. 14. 'What if it were but one or two in a whole kingdom that were damned, and that only for obstinate, unpersuadable, final refusal of grace and salvation, and all the rest of the world should be saved; tell me, would you then still suspect God of cruelty, or deny his goodness?' If not, I further ask you:

Quest. 15. 'Have you so good an acquaintance with the extent of the universe, the superior world, the number of angels and blessed spirits, as that you are sure that it is proportionably more in the whole universe, that are miserable?' Though some peevish men have wrangled at what I have said of this in my forecited books, I am so far from flattering their self-conceited wisdom that I will say it over again: That it is agreed on by philosophers, that the earth, as to the universe, is no bigger than a point or inch is to the whole earth; we see over our heads, a wonderful sun, a multitude of fixed and unfixed stars, of wonderful magnitude, divers of them many times bigger than all the earth; besides the vast ethereal interspaces; we see in

a tube or telescope, a marvelous likeness of the moon to this earth, with shades, inequalities, &c. Multitudes of stars in the galaxy and elsewhere, are discernible in the telescope, which without it no eye can see ; little know we how far the world extendeth itself, beyond all these stars and sun which we can see ; or whether there be millions of the like beyond our sight. The Scripture telleth us of innumerable angels, holy and glorious spirits, that attend Christ in the service of this lower world. No Scripture telleth us whether all the glorious or blessed spirits be thus employed as angels for mankind, or whether ten thousand thousandfold more be otherwise employed. No Scripture or reason telleth whether sun or moon, stars and intermediate æther, be inhabited or not ? It is temerity to affirm that they are. And it is a great temerity to say that they are not. It is lawful to doubt, and it is lawful to conjecture, that it is most probable they are, considering, 1. That life is the excellency of the creation, and the dearest parts are the basest. 2. That the earth, and water, and air, are full of men, beasts, fishes, birds, worms, flies, &c. 3. That it is incredible to him that looketh upward, that sun, moon, stars, and æther, are baser regions than this dirty earth ; and consequently that they are baser as to their use and inhabitants. These thoughts of an uncertain thing, are lawful, to him that will go no further than he hath evidence, and not make an uncertain thing seem certain ; and certain it is, that spirits are innumerable. And though some of these have fallen to be devils, God hath not told us how many ; nor can we know that it is one to a million of happier creatures. And can that man, then, who is offended with God, not for damning a very few, but for the proportion of the damned in comparison of others, tell what he saith ? Can he say, if God had cast off all this earth, that it had been more than one of a million of millions as to the whole creation ? It is true I cannot tell the number ; but it is as true that when our foundation is sure, that God is infinitely wise and good, it is madness to accuse him as unwise, or evil, or cruel, for that which we must confess we do not know ; and to talk against him in the dark. Stay till you see who dwelleth in all the superior regions, and then take yourselves for fitter discerners of your Maker's ways.

Quest. 16. 'Are you well acquainted with the nature and degrees of the future miseries which tempt you to think that God is cruel?' They are not all of one degree; what if much of them be still voluntary to the miserable souls? The devils who are now tormented in hell, are yet inhabitants of the air, and exercised in voluntary acts of malice. I take it to be no small degree of hell which the ungodly choose, and love, and possess among us here on earth, and will not be dissuaded from; they are without all holy communion with God, and they would be so; they are out of heaven, and they would be so; they are debased and confined to sensual pleasures, and worldly vanities, and they will be so; they are the drudges of the devil, and the servants of the flesh, and the slaves of men, and they would be so; they are defiled with sin, and imprisoned in their own concupiscence, and they would be so; they are corrupted, and tantalized and vexed, and tossed up and down by their irregular desires; in a word, they have the plague of sin, and have neither holiness nor true happiness, and so they will have it to be, and will not be cured; now these tempted persons can see a misery in pain; but can see no such evil in sin, for which such pain should be inflicted; when as sin itself, and that which they are willing of, is so great a part of their misery, as that in this life, the rest is as nothing to it. And though, no doubt, much will be involuntary hereafter, we know not what the proportion will be between the voluntary and involuntary part.

And what makes these men that they do not pity a drunkard, a fornicator, a worldling, a sensual lord or gentleman, that hath no better than the shadows which he chooseth? Neither the tempted, nor they themselves, would call God cruel if he would let them so live in health forever; even a healthful beggar would call God merciful if he might never die, nor be more miserable. But princes or lords would call him cruel, if he should put them into the beggar's or laborer's case. You accuse not God as cruel for making toads and serpents, worms and vermin, because they are not troubled with their own condition; but if you could imagine them to have the knowledge how much happier men are, the case would alter. Or if God should change men into toads and serpents, you would call him unmerciful; when yet he is no more bound antecedently to man than

unto them. Thus because these tempted persons have, as Adam when his eyes were opened, a disquieting knowledge, to know good and evil penally; their own apprehension (as Adam's of his nakedness) maketh that seem cruelty, which seemed a fruit of goodness before.

The sum is, when you come into another world, and see what manner of punishment it is that God exerciseth on the damned (as well as on how many) you will then be perfectly satisfied, that there is nothing but that amiable justice, which is the fruit of holiness, goodness, and wisdom in it all; and you shall see nothing in the punishment of the miserable which you shall either blame or wish were otherwise, if you come to heaven.

To which let me add, when you come to see the heavenly glory, and how the God of infinite goodness hath advanced such innumerable hosts (if not worlds) of men and angels into such wonderful felicity, and compare this with the sufferings of the devil and of his damned followers, instead then of quarrelling with the goodness of God, you will be wrapt up in the admirations and praises of it with full delights, to all eternity.

Quest. 17. 'And tell me, is he fit to entertain suspicions and quarrels with God, who knoweth God to be God, and knoweth himself to be but a man?' I speak not only in respect of *our inferiority*, as the potsherd should not quarrel with the potter; but in respect of our great and certain ignorance. Are we not puzzled about the poorest worm and pile of grass, whose manifold mysteries no mortal man can yet discover? Are we not grossly ignorant about every thing (even visible and palpable) which we see, and touch, and have to do with? Do we not know that we know but little, even of ourselves, or of any thing about us in the world? And shall the darkened soul, while it must operate in such a puddle of brains and humors, be so madly proud, as to presume of a knowledge, which findeth out errors and badness in God, who is infinitely wise and good? Nothing is more sure than that God is most wise and good; and nothing should be more easily known to us, than that we are very blind and bad. And if such wretches then cannot reconcile their thoughts about God's works, should they not rather suspect themselves than him? Suspect,

did I say ; should they not take it as the surest verity, that it is God, that is not only justifiable, but infinitely amiable and laudable, and that it is worse than brutishness, for such moles to be his accusers ?

Quest. 18. Yea, 'is this accusing God a fit employment for that person, who liveth in a land of mercies : who hath been bred up in mercy, preserved by mercy, yea, differenced by saving mercy from the ungodly, who hath been called from blindness, carnality, and profaneness, and entertained many a time in holy worship with God ; who hath been washed in Christ's blood, and justified from so many and grievous sins, and made of an enemy an adopted child, and of a heir of hell a heir of heaven, and all this by the tender mercies of a provoked God, a gracious Redeemer, and a holy Sanctifier ?' Shall this person, I say, this, be one that instead of praising God with the raptures of continual joy, shall turn his accuser ? O let the guilty that readeth this stop here, and fall down on his knees to God, and melt into tears in the sense of such unkindness.

Quest. 19. 'But can a child of God be possibly guilty of so great a sin as this ?'

Answ. I speak not now of the malignant atheist ; but of the melancholy, tempted persons. Alas, it is the melancholy disease, and the devil, more than he. God pitieth his children's frowardness, especially when necessitated naturally by diseases ; and he that pardoned peevish Jonas, that said, "I do well to be angry to the death ;" and complaining Job ; and excused his sleepy disciples with "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," will not condemn an upright soul, for the effect of a feverish delirium, or a melancholy that overcomes his natural power of resistance.

Quest. 20. 'Would you thus argue or quarrel against God's greatness and wisdom, as you do against his goodness ?' You suspect him to be unmerciful, because he cureth not men's sins, and preventeth not their damnation. And have you not the like occasion to argue against his other perfections ? Do you think he reasoneth soberly that saith, 'He that maketh asses when he might have made them men, or maketh idiots, or maketh stones that know nothing ; he that is the governor of such a foolish, distracted, confused world as mankind is, is foolish himself, or unskilful in government, or wanteth wisdom.'

But God doth thus.' Is he not worse than a fool that will accuse his God of folly? Doth not the admirable harmony of all the world, and his wonderful work in every creature, prove his incomprehensible wisdom? And what would you say to him that should thus reason: 'He that maketh impotent worms, that suffereth the good to die, that suffereth the tyrants of the earth to persecute his church and cause, is impotent, and not almighty. But so doth God?' Would you not say, 'I have the wonderful frame of heaven and earth, the sun and stars, the sea and land, to prove to me that he is Almighty. This therefore is a proved foundation truth, to which all doubts must be reduced? And if you dare not be so impudent as to deny his Omniscience or Omnipotence, when you think there is error or impotency in his works, why will you any more deny his goodness, when you dream that there is badness in his works? Do you not know, that power, wisdom, and goodness are God's three essential principles of operation, virtues, or properties? And that they are none of them greater or less than other? And that his goodness (though not as to be measured by human interest) is equal to his wisdom and his greatness? And do you not know, that to deny any one of the three, yea, to deny the perfection of any one of them, is to deny that there is any God? And is he sober that will argue, 'There are frogs and toads, there are worms and asses, there are fools and miserable sinners, therefore there is no God.' When as there could neither be any of these, nor any world or being, if there were no God?

Quest. 21. Lastly, now consider, 'whether evidently, the root of all this sin be not (besides melancholy and Satan) the power of selfishness, and sensual or fleshly interest.' Alas! poor men, that were made for their God, to rejoice wholly in pleasing him, and to shew forth the lustre of his glory, are fallen to themselves and flesh; and now they that should wholly devote and refer themselves to God, do strive to make God a servant to themselves, and measure his goodness by the standard of their fleshly sense and interest; and God shall be with them no longer good, that is, no longer God, than he will give them their wills, and serve their flesh, and keep them from crosses, and losses, and pains, and govern the world according to their fancies; and when they are committing this odious, self-exalting

idolatry, and abasing God, even then will they judge themselves both wiser, and more merciful than he. Yea, when a melancholy man despaireth in the sense of his own sin and badness, at that very time he thinketh himself more merciful than the God of infinite goodness, and accuseth his God for being more cruel than he himself. O man, into what distraction and confusion art thou fallen, when thou departest from thy God, and sinkest into that blind and wretched self.

And tell me, what if but the wills of all the poor, the pained, the dying, &c. were but reconciled to their suffering state. Would that which pleaseth the will be matter of any complaint? You may see then that it is not God's providence, &c. but the wills and ways of sinners, that are the diseased causes of all their wranglings. And if our wills were cured, and reduced to God's will, we should find no fault with him; if I can but be truly willing of imprisonment, poverty, or death, how can I feel any thing in it to complain of? When even sinners, as aforesaid, do obstinately here take their misery for their happiness, and are contented with it so far as it is voluntary.

By that time these twenty questions are answered, the accusations of God as wanting goodness, will all turn to the accuser's shame.

II. I am next briefly to detect the false opinions which do ordinarily cause these persons' errors.

1. It is false doctrine to affirm that God condemneth the greatest part of his intellectual creatures (as I have shewed) though he condemn never so many of this ungodly world.

2. It is not true that God decreeth to condemn any man but for sin, (for sin, I say, as the cause of his damnation.)

3. God decreeth to condemn none at age (which I add but to exclude foolish cavils) for Adam's sin only; nor for any other sin only that is not conjoined with an obstinate, final impenitency, and rejecting offered mercy, and neglecting means appointed for their salvation.

4. God's decrees do cause no man's sin (nor his damnation any further than as supposing sin), for Dr. Twisse himself still professeth,

1. That reprobation is an immanent act, and 'nihil ponit in objecto,' putteth nothing at all into the person. 2. And that reprobation inferreth no necessity of sin or misery, but that which is called 'necessitas consequentiæ,' and not any 'necessitas consequentis;' and Ar-

minius and all confess that God's bare foreknowledge causeth or inferreth a 'necessitas consequentiæ,' which truly is but a logical necessity in order of argumentation, when one thing is proved by another; and not by physical necessity in order of causation, as one thing is caused by another.

And whereas they say, 'Then man might have frustrated God's decree.' I ask them whether man can frustrate God's foreknowledge; suppose God to foreknow sin without decreeing it (of which more anon), is not this a good argument, 'All that God foreknoweth will certainly come to pass. But God foreknoweth, e. g. Judas's sin, therefore it will certainly come to pass.' And what of all this? It doth not come to pass, because God foreknoweth it, any more than the sun will rise to-morrow, because you foreknow it.

And if you say, that no power can frustrate God's foreknowledge, I answer, they are delusory words of one that knoweth not what he saith. For it is one thing to have power to make God ignorant, and another thing to have power to do otherwise than that which he foreknoweth you will do. No man hath power to make God ignorant; but all sinners may have power to do otherwise than that which God foreknoweth they will do. For God doth not foreknow that, e. g. Gehezi, shall not have power to forbear a lie; but only that he will not forbear it. Yea, more, God's foreknowledge doth prove that sinners have power to do otherwise; for that which God foreknoweth will be. But God foreknoweth that men will abuse their power to sin, or will sin when they had power to do otherwise, therefore it will be so in the event.

Now if you will call their power to do otherwise, a power to frustrate God's foreknowledge, you will but speak foolishly. For the power itself is foreknown; and the object of knowledge 'in esse cognito,' is not after the act of knowledge. And if the person will not actually sin, God could not foreknow that he will sin. So that foreknowledge is here (when it is not causal) but a medium in a syllogism, and inferreth only the necessity of the consequence in arguing, and doth not cause the thing foreknown.

Now when Dr. Twisse saith, that all the schoolmen agree, that no necessity, 'consequentis,' or of causation, but only 'consequentæ,'

doth follow the decree of reprobation, see how far he and Arminius are in this agreed, (though I know some give another sense of 'necessitas consequentiæ.') But I come closer to the matter yet.

5. God decreeth no man's sin; neither Adam's nor any other's. He may decree the effect, which sinners accomplish (as the death of Christ,) and he may overrule men in their sin, and bring good out of it, &c. But sin is not a thing that he can will or cause, and so not decree, which signifieth a volition.

6. God cannot be proved to decree, or will the permission of man's sin. For to permit is nothing. It is but not to hinder; which is no act: and to decree and will is a positive act. And if you faint God to have a positive volition or nolition, of every thing, or negative, then he must have positive decrees of every mere possible atom, sand, worm, name, word, thought of man, &c. That such and such a nothing shall never be; whereas, there needeth no more to keep any thing from being (in this case) than God's not causing it, not willing it, not decreeing it. The creature's active nature, disposition, objects, and circumstances, are here pre-supposed; and the impedition necessary, is by act, or subtraction of these aforesaid, and God's 'non agere' needs no positive decree. I must tell the learned reader, that this room will not to answer his foreseen objections. But I hope I have done it sufficiently elsewhere.

7. God hath not only decreed to give, but actually given a great deal of mercy to them that perish, which had a natural tendency to their salvation. Christ hath so far died for all, as that none shall perish for want of a sufficiency in the satisfaction made: he hath purchased and given for all a grant or gift of himself, with pardon, justification, adoption and right to glory, on condition of acceptance (where the Gospel cometh.) In a word, so that none of them shall perish, that do not finally refuse the grace and salvation offered them.

8. Men are not impenitent and unbelievers for want of that called natural faculty, or power to choose and refuse aright; but for want of a right disposition of their own wills; and by such a moral impotency, which is indeed their viciousness, and the wickedness of their wills, and doth not excuse, but aggravate the sin. (See Mr. Truman of "Natural and Moral Impotency.")

9. To rectify men's wicked wills and dispositions, God giveth them a world of means; the whole creation, and documents of providence; all the precepts, promises, threats of Scripture; preaching, example, mercies, judgments, patience and inward motions of the Spirit; all which might do much to men's conversation and salvation, if they would but do what they could on their own part.

10. Adam could have stood when he fell, without any more grace than that which he abused and neglected. God's grace, which was not effectual to him, was as much as was necessary to his standing, if he would have done his best: and it was left to his freewill, to have made that help effectual by improvement. He fell, not because he could not stand, but because he would not.

11. For aught any can prove, multitudes that believe not now, but perish, may have rejected a help as sufficient to their believing, as Adam's was to his standing.

12. All men have power to do more good, and avoid more evil than they do; and he that will not do what he can do, justly suffereth.

13. Heathens and infidels are not left unredeemed under the remediless curse, and covenant of innocency, which we broke in Adam; but are all brought by the redemption wrought by Christ, under a law, or terms, of grace. (1.) God made a covenant of grace with all mankind in Adam; (Gen. iii. 15.) who was by tradition to acquaint his posterity with it, as he did to Cain and Abel, the ordinances of oblation and sacrifice. (2.) This covenant was renewed with all mankind in Noah. (3.) This covenant is not repealed, otherwise than by a more perfect edition to them that have the plenary Gospel. (4.) The full Gospel-covenant is made for all, as to the tenor of it, and the command of preaching and offering it to all. (5.) They that have not this edition, may yet be under the first edition. (6.) The Jews, under the first edition were saved without believing in this determinate person of Jesus, or that he should die for sin, and rise again, and send down the Spirit: for the apostles believed it not beforehand; (Luke xviii. 34. John xii. 16. Luke ix. 45. Mark ix. 34. Luke xxiv. 21. 25, 26. Acts i. 6—8.) yet were they then in a state of saving grace, as appeareth by John xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. through-

out. (7.) The rest of the world that had not the same supernatural revelation, were not then bound to believe so much as the Jews were, about the Messiah. (8.) God himself told them all, that they were not under the unremedied curse of the covenant of innocence, by giving them a life full of those mercies which they had forfeited, which all did tend to lead them to repentance, and to seek after God (Rom. ii. 4. Acts xvii. 27.), and "find him; yea, he left not himself without witness, for that which may be known of him, and his invisible things are manifested and clearly seen in his works;" so that the wicked are without excuse; Rom. i. 19, 20. Acts xiv. 17. So that all heathens are bound "to believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" (Heb. xi. 6.) And are all under the duty of using certain means, in order to their own recovery and salvation, and to believe that they are not commanded to do this in vain: so that God's own providence by a course of such mercies, which cannot stand with the execution of the unremedied, violated law of innocence, together with his obliging all men to repentance, and to the use of a certain course of means, in order to their salvation, is a promulgation of a law of grace, according to the first edition, and distinguisheth man from unredeemed devils.

And they that say that all the infidel world have all this mercy, duty, means and hope, without any redemption or satisfaction of Christ as the procuring cause, are in the way to say next, 'That the church's mercies too might have been given without Christ.' (9.) "Of a truth, God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him;" Acts x. 34, 35. For "God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and incorruptibility, eternal life;" Rom. ii. 6, 7. "Glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek;" ver. 10. "For there is no respect of persons with God;" ver. 11. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

er;" ver. 14, 15. And they shall be judged according to that law which they were under, natural or mosaical, "even by Jesus Christ;" ver. 12. 16. And it is the work of the Spirit promised to believers, to write the law of God in their hearts.

(10.) Though a special promise was made to Abraham, as an eminent believer, and the Jewish nation were the peculiar people of God, advanced to greater privileges than any others in the world; yet were they not the whole kingdom of God the Redeemer, nor the only people that were in a covenant of grace, or in a state of salvation. For Shem was alive after Abraham's death, who was not like to be less than a king, and to have a kingdom and a people governed according to his fidelity. And Melchisedec was a king of righteousness and peace, not like to be Shem by the situation of his country. And a righteous king would govern in righteousness. Job and his friends are evidences of the same truth. And we have no proof or probability that all Abraham's seed by Ishmael, and Esau, and Keturah, were apostates, for they continued circumcision. And what all the rest of the world was we know not, save that in general most grew idolatrous, and the Canaanites in special. But that they all apostatized from the covenant of grace made with Adam and Noah, there is no proof. We have not the history of any of their countries fully, so as to determine of such cases. In Nineveh God ruled by that law of grace which called them to repent, and spared them upon their belief and repentance; "Because he was a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth of the evil:" Jonah iv. 2.

And that God dealeth not with mankind now as the mere judge of the violated law of innocency; he declareth not only by the full testimony of his providence, or mercies given to the sinful world; but also by the very name, which he proclaimeth unto Moses (which signifieth his nature, and his mind towards others, and not what he is to Jews alone) Exod. xxiv. 6, 7. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." All which is inconsistent with the relation of God, as a judge of a people, only under the curse of an unremedied violated law,

and unredeemed, though he add, "and that will by no means clear the guilty," &c. that is, will neither judge them innocent that are guilty of the crime, nor judge them to life that are guilty of death, according to the tenor of the law which they are under; 'Purificando non purificabit' as the literal version; that is, will not judge unjustly, by acquitting him that is to be condemned, or as the Chaldee paraphrase hath it, 'not justifying those that are not converted.'

It is enough for us therefore to know, that the visible church hath manifold privileges above all others; Rom. iii. 1—3., &c. And that salvation is more easy, sure, and plenteous, where the Gospel cometh, than with any others; and that we have therefore great cause to rejoice with thankfulness for our lot, and that the poor world lieth in wickedness, and must be pitied, prayed for, and helped to our power, and that "God is the Savior of all men, but especially of them that believe; and that he is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works;" and that he will never damn one soul that loveth him as God. But what is in the hearts of all men in the world, and consequently how they shall be used at last, he only that searcheth the heart can tell; and it is neither our duty nor our interest, nor possible to us, to know it of all particulars, much less to conclude, that none among them have such love, who believe him to be infinitely good, and to be to them a merciful, pardoning God. And we know withal, that all they that know not Jesus Christ, as this determinate person that was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, buried, rose again, &c., do yet receive all the aforesaid mercies by him, and not by any other name or mediation, nor yet without his purchasing mediation.

14. And if besides all the mercy that God sheweth to others, he do antecedently and positively elect certain persons, by an absolute decree, to overcome all their resistances of his Spirit, and to draw them to Christ, and by Christ to himself, by such a power and way as shall infallibly convert and save them, and not leave the success of his mercy, and his Son's preparations, to the bare uncertainty of the mutable will of depraved man, what is there in this that is injurious to any others? Or that representeth God unmerciful to any but such whose eye is evil, because he is good, and as a free benefac-

tor, may give more mercy to some than others of equal demerits? If they that hold no grace but what is universal, and left, as to the success, to the will of man, as the determining cause, do think that this is well consistent with the mercifulness of God; surely they that hold as much universal grace as the former; and that indeed all have so much, as bringeth and leaveth the success to man's will, and deny to no man any thing which the other give, do make God no *less* merciful than they; but *more*, if they moreover assert a special decree and grace of God, which, with a chosen number, shall antecedently infallibly secure his ends in their repentance, faith, perseverance, and salvation. Is this any detraction from, or diminution of his universal grace? Or rather a higher demonstration of his goodness? As it is no wrong to man that God maketh angels more holy, immutable and happy.

15. And what if men cannot here tell how to resolve the question 'Whether any, or how many are ever converted and saved, by that mere grace which we call sufficient, or rather necessary, and common to those that are not converted; and whether man will ever make a saving, determining improvement of it;' must plain truth be denied, because difficulties cannot easily be solved? And yet in due place I doubt not but I have shewed, that this question itself is formed upon false suppositions, and is capable of a satisfactory solution.

16. I conclude in general, that nothing is more sure, than that God is most powerful, wise, and good, and that all his works, to those that truly know them, do manifest all these in conjunction and perfect harmony; and that as to his decrees and providences, he is the cause of all good, and of no sin in act or habit, and that our sin and destruction is of ourselves, and of him is our holiness and salvation; and that he attaineth all his ends as certainly, as if men's will had no liberty, but were acted by physical necessitation: and yet that man's will hath as much natural liberty, as if God had not gone before it with any decree of the event, and as much moral liberty as we have moral virtue or holiness.

And these principles I have laid down in a little room, that tempted persons may see, that it is our dark and puzzled brains, and our

selfish, diseased hearts, that are the cause of our quarreling with God, his decrees and providences; and as soon as we come to ourselves and are cured, these odious apprehensions vanish, and God appeareth as the unclouded sun, in the lustre of his amiable goodness: and when we come to heaven, we shall see to our joy, and his glory, that heaven, earth and hell, declare him to be all perfectly good, without any mixture of evil in himself, or in any of his word or works. And we shall find all our sinful suspicions and murmurings turned into a joyful consent to the angelical praises. Psal. cxxxvi. 1. 2. 26. &c. "O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy is forever. O give thanks unto the God of heaven, for his mercy is forever; Rev. iv. 8. 11. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come—Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.—Rev. vii. 12. Amen, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, unto our God for ever and ever, Amen. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy;" Psal. cxlv. 8, 9. "The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth: he loveth righteousness and judgment; the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord;" Psal. xxxiii. 4, 5. "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men;" Psal. xxxi. 19. "O therefore that men (instead of quarreling with his unknown mysteries) would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men;" Psal. cvii. 8. 15. 21. 31.

In the conclusion, I take it to be wholesome advice to those that are under this temptation:

1. That they will oft read over the Psalms of praise, and think, when they read them, whether David and the ancient church, were not more likely to know what they said, than a self-conceited, or a melancholy tempted sinner?

2. That they would consider, who it is that is the grand enemy of the glory of God's goodness, and they shall soon find that it is none

other than the devil ; none but he that is most evil, can most envy infinite Goodness his honor. And is the devil fit to be believed against God ? And that, after the warning of our first parent's ruin, which befel them for believing Satan, when he slandered both God's wisdom, truth, and goodness to them ?

3. That they would bethink them to what end it is, that the tempter, and the enemy of God, do thus deny his goodness. Is it not a plain act of malice against God and us ? Is it not that he may disgrace God as evil, and rob him of his glory ; and also that he may hinder man from loving him, and so destroy all piety, and virtue, and goodness in the world ? Who can love him whom he believeth to be bad, and so unlovely ? And what grace or happiness can there be without the love of God ?

4. That they would think what horrid wickedness this sin containeth (where melancholy and involuntariness do not extenuate it). Is it any better than a denying that there is any God ? As is said before ; to be God, is to be perfectly powerful, wise and good : and if there be none such, there can be no God. And then who made the world, and all that is good in it by derivated goodness ? Yea, is it not to represent the most amiable blessed God, in Satan's image (" who is most evil and a murderer from the beginning ;" John viii. 44.) that so men may hate him, and fly from him as they do from devils ? And can you tell how great a crime this is ?

5. That they would consider, how this impious conceit is calculated for the licensing of all manner of villany in the world, and to root out all the relics of goodness from among mankind. For who can expect that any man should be better than his Maker, and that he should have any good, who denieth God to be good ?

6. That they would labor hard to be better themselves ; for he that hath a true created goodness, is thereby prepared to relish and admire God's primitive uncreated goodness : whereas a wicked or a guilty sinner cannot much value that which he is so unsuitable to, and which he thinks will be to him a consuming fire. " Truly God is good to Israel, and to such as are of a clean heart ;" Psal. lxxiii.

1. But he that liveth in the love of sin, will be doubting of the love of God, and fearful of his wrath, and unfit to relish and delightfully



perceive his goodness. "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him;" Psal. lxxxiv. 8.

7. Study God's love as manifested in Christ; then you shall see what man on earth may see. But think not falsely, narrowly, or basely of his office, his performance, or his covenant.

8. Dwell in the believing foresight of the celestial glory; the reflections of which may wrap up a believing soul on earth, into ecstasies of gratitude and delight.

9. Remember what goodness there is in the holiness of God, which is demonstrated in his severest justice; yea, what mercy it is to forewarn men of the punishment of sin, that they may want no necessary means to escape it.

10. Remember how unfit the selfish interest of obstinate despisers of grace and salvation is, to be the measure or index of the goodness of God: and how much more credible the concordant testimony of the heavenly host is, who live in the love of Love itself, and are everlastingly delighted in the praises of the infinite greatness, wisdom, and goodness of the most perfect, blessed, glorious God.

REASONS

FOR MINISTERS USING THE GREATEST PLAINNESS AND SERIOUS-
NESS POSSIBLE,

IN ALL THEIR

APPLICATIONS TO THEIR PEOPLE.

To shew the reasonableness that all ministers should deal thus faithfully, and plainly with such as are under their Ministry, I will lay open somewhat of the case before you, and then judge reasonably of it as you are men. The eternal God, delighting in the wonderful diversity of his creatures, hath made man of a middle nature, between brutes and angels, giving him vital power, reason and free-

will. He hath placed him in this world, as for a race or warfare ; resolving that as he behaveth himself it shall go with him in another world for ever : For though his body be dust, and must to dust return, his soul is from above, and liveth in blessedness or misery for ever. By sin we have all forfeited our right to heaven : but Eternal love hath given us a Redeemer, who is God, and man, who as our surety became a sacrifice for our sins, and by his merits hath purchased a conditional grant of free forgiveness, and of renewing grace, and endless glory ; and being ascended into heaven, possesseth it in our nature, and intercedeth for us, being now, as Redeemer, Lord of all. He hath appointed the Ministerial office, that men might be his messengers to men, to acquaint them with his grace, and with the glory which he prepareth for them, that they may truly believe it, soberly think of it, duly value it, heartily choose it, and diligently seek it, and live and die in the joyful expectation of it. And as our souls converse not with our neighbors immediately, but in and by our bodies in which they work ; so the Spirit of Christ doth not ordinarily work on men's souls without any means, but by his word and works which his ministers must declare. Man is not now put upon satisfying God's justice, or purchasing his salvation by a price. Christ hath done these, and made a free gift of grace and glory to all that will but accept it. Under God's grace, men's everlasting salvation now lieth on their own wills ; no men or devils can damn or undo any one soul, but by his own consent to the cause of his damnation. No men or devils can keep one soul from the heavenly glory, but by tempting him to refuse it, undervalue and neglect it, and prefer the pleasures of sin before it, and by keeping him from loving, desiring and seeking it : for every one shall certainly have it who had rather be a holy Christian on earth, and live in perfect love and joy with God in heaven for ever, than for his filthy pleasure to enjoy the prosperity of this world. To acquaint men with this, is our ministerial office ; we are charged to set before them the great salvation which Christ hath procured, and importunately to beseech them to mind it, believe it, and accept it, that it may be theirs for ever : we believe God, and therefore we speak to men as he hath commanded us : we entreat them in his name, to turn from sinful enmity and folly, and to be

reconciled to God, and be wise for their salvation : we tell them but what God's word sent from heaven, telleth us and them, that holiness is the love of God and goodness, and the hatred of sin ; that the pure in heart are blessed, for they shall see God. But without holiness none can see him : We tell them from God, that heaven is won or lost on earth ; and that none shall have it but such as hence learn to love a holy and heavenly life ; and that the dislike of holiness is the forfeiture of happiness, and the beginning, or forerunner of hell : We assure them, that God will never say, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, if they do not first by iniquity depart from God ; and that God will not damn them, except they damn themselves, by the obstinate final refusing and resisting of his mercy. We entreat men therefore but to live as men should do that love themselves, and that are not indifferent whether they live in heaven or hell for ever. We entreat them not to be worse to themselves, than the devil and all their enemies are, who cannot make them commit one sin against their wills ; and yet after all this warning, entreaty, importunity, there are thousands, and ten thousands that will not be persuaded, nor regard the warning given them from God ; some will not believe but that a man dies like a dog ; and what wonder if such live like dogs ! And some will not believe but that they may be saved without regenerating grace and holiness, though Christ's own mouth hath protested the contrary, and told us verily that it cannot be. (John iii. 3. 15. 18, 19 ; Matt. xviii. 3 ; Heb. xii. 14 ; Rom. viii. 6—9. 13, &c.) Multitudes will not be brought to understand what we say ; but when we talk of redemption, sanctification, and salvation, they hear us as if we spake Greek or Hebrew to them, and under teaching, grow old in sottish, grossest ignorance ; multitudes are taken up with the love of prosperity, and the love of this deceiving world : multitudes are carried away with aspiring ambition and foolish pride ; and more with the love of fleshly pleasures, and satisfying their appetites and lusts. Many poor people (who every where are the most) are so oppressed with want, and wearied with their daily labor, and taken up with cares to pay their rents and debts, and maintain their families, that they they think it excusable in them if they little mind the pleasing of God, and saving of their souls ; supposing that they have no

leisure for it, and God requireth it not at their hands. And the same most servants think, who have time little enough for their master's work. Multitudes have such dead and hardened hearts, that, when we tell them that they must shortly be in heaven or hell, as they are here prepared, we speak almost as to blocks, or men asleep : they feel not what we say, as if they did not hear us.

We are bid cry aloud, and tell them of their sin and danger, and yet we cannot get them to regard and feel ; God saith, "Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light ;" and yet we cannot get them to awake, nor hear us like men that have the use of reason, and love themselves. Alas, how many thousands are there whom we could never persuade to consider with deep and serious thoughts, what will become of their souls, when they are dead, nor seek to be resolved of it from the infallible Word of God !

Sirs, this, this is the case of multitudes of our neighbors ; and what would you have a Minister to do in such a case ? Should we flatter and smooth them up in an unholy life, what thanks would they give us for this ere long, when they find themselves in hell ?

Would you have us stand by in silence, and look on, while Satan thus leadeth thousands to perdition ? Would you have us let them quietly go to hell, for fear of displeasing them or others, or seeming to be unmannerly or uncivil with them ? Would you have us whisper to men that must be awakened or undone for ever, whom thunder and lightning will not awake ?

Alas, we see men dying daily, and we are dying ourselves, and daily look when we speak our last, and when they hear their last, even all that ever they shall hear more for their salvation : We see how time doth pass away ! much is lost already, the rest is short, and utterly uncertain : and the ignorance, unbelief, hardheartedness, fleshliness, worldliness, pride, malignity, and unholiness of sinners, are deep-rooted, strong and damnable evils. We see men when they are convinced, that they must repent or perish, putting it off from day to day ; when they are certainly to be gone ere long, and never certain of one more hour : and, alas, a long life is little enough for a willing, awakened serious Christian to work out his salvation, and make his calling and election sure.

Sirs, tell us as Christians, or at least as men, what faith, and reason, and human love command us to do in such a case? Shall we forbear, or speak to them in formality as on a stage, as if we were players, and not preachers, and would persuade them not to believe what we say, should we let them alone, be damned, and take it for our excuse, that they or others were unwilling of our labors? Shall we pretend charity, and hope that they have already enough to save them, while we see not so much as knowledge, or any love, to holiness nor forsaking of mortal sin, nor any serious care of their salvation? Is it the office of charity to further men's delusion and damnation? If we believed not another life ourselves, and that there is a God who will reward them, and only them, that diligently seek him, (Heb. xi. 6,) we would quickly renounce this ungrateful ministry and work; we could wish that all the preachers in the world were silenced, and that the people would better use their tithes than to maintain such troublers of the world. But God hath shined into our minds with the heavenly convincing light. He hath given us the first fruits and pledge of glory: We believe a heaven and a hell, and the absolute necessity of a holy and heavenly mind and life; and we know why we do believe. Here we have upon our sober consideration, laid up all our hopes and comforts; and what should we persuade our neighbors to choose, but that which God hath taught us to choose ourselves? And woe to him that ever he was born, that maketh not this choice, and taketh not the heavenly for his portion.

RICHARD BAXTER.

December 18, 1676.

FROM THE POOR MAN'S FAMILY BOOK.

A PRAYER FOR FAMILIES.

ALMIGHTY, all-seeing, and most gracious God! The world and all therein is made, maintained, and ordered by thee. Thou art every where present, being more than the soul of all the world. Though thou art revealed in thy glory to those only that are in heaven, thy grace is still at work on earth to prepare men for thy glory. Thou madest

us not as the beasts that perish, but with reasonable, immortal souls, to know, and seek, and serve thee here, and then to live, with all the blessed, in the everlasting sight of thy heavenly glory, and the pleasures of thy perfect love and praise. But we are ashamed to think how foolishly and sinfully we have forgotten and neglected our God and our souls, and our hopes of blessed immortality ; and have overmuch minded the things of this visible, transitory world, and the prosperity and pleasure of this corruptible flesh, which we know must turn to rottenness and dust. Thou gavest us a law which was just and good, to guide us in the only way to life ; and when by sin we had undone ourselves thou gavest us a Savior, even thy eternal Word made man, who by his holy life and bitter sufferings reconciled us to thee, and both purchased salvation for us, and revealed it to us, better than an angel from heaven could have done, if thou hadst sent him to us sinners on such a message. But, alas ! how light have we set by our Redeemer, and by all that love which thou hast manifested by him, and how little have we studied and understood, and less obeyed that covenant of grace which thou hast made by him to lost mankind.

But, O God be merciful to us, vile and miserable sinners ; Forgive the sins of our natural pravity, and the follies of our youth, and all the ignorance, negligence, omissions, and commissions of our lives ; and give us true repentance for them, or else we know that thou wilt not forgive them. Our life is but as a shadow that passeth away ; and it is a moment till we must leave this world, and appear before thee to give up our account, and to speed for ever as here we have prepared. Should we die, before thou hast turned our hearts from this sinful flesh and world to thee, by true faith and repentance, we shall be lost for evermore. O, wo to us, that ever we were born, if thou forgive not our sins, and make us not holy before this short, uncertain life be at an end ! Had we all the riches and pleasures of this world, they would shortly leave us in the greater sorrows. We know that all our life is but the time which thy mercy alloteth us to prepare for death ; therefore we should not put off our repentance and preparation to a sick bed. But now, Lord, as if it were our last and dying words, we earnestly beg thy pardoning and sanctifying grace, through the merits and intercession of our Redeemer. O thou that hast pitied and

saved so many millions of miserable sinners, pity and save us also, that we ~~may~~ glorify thy grace for ever. Surely thou delightest not in the death of sinners, but rather that they return and live : hadst thou been unwilling to show mercy, thou wouldest not have ransomed us by so precious a price, and still entreat us to be reconciled unto thee. We have no cause to distrust thy truth or goodness ; but we are afraid lest unbelief, and pride, and hypocrisy, and a worldly, fleshly mind, should be our ruin. O save us from Satan and this tempting world, but especially from ourselves ! Teach us to deny all ungodliness and fleshly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. Let it be our chiefest daily work to please thee and to lay up a treasure in heaven, and to make sure of a blessed life with Christ, and quietly to trust thee with soul and body. Make us faithful in our callings, and our duties to one another, and to all men ; to our superiors, equals, and inferiors ; bless the king, and all in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Give wise, holy, and peaceable pastors to all the churches of Christ, and holy and peaceable minds to the people. Convert the heathen and infidel nations of the world ; and cause us and all thy people to seek, first, the hallowing of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, and the doing of thy will on earth as it is done in heaven. Give us our daily bread, even all things necessary to life and godliness, and let us be therewith content. Forgive us our daily sins, and let thy love and mercy constrain us to love thee above all ; and for thy sake to love our neighbors as ourselves, and in all our dealings to do justly and mercifully, as we would have others do by us. Keep us from hurtful temptations, from sin, and from thy judgments, and from the malice of our spiritual and coporeal enemies ; and let all our thoughts, affections, passions, words, and actions, be governed by thy word and Spirit, to thy glory. Make all our religion and obedience pleasant to us, and let our souls be so delighted in the praises of thy kingdom, thy power, and thy glory that it may secure and sweeten our labor by day, and our rest by night, and keep us in a longing and joyful hope of the heavenly glory : and let the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God our Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us now and for ever. Amen.

FROM THE POOR MAN'S FAMILY BOOK.

A Psalm of Praise to the Tune of Psalm cxlviii.

1. YE holy ANGELS bright,
Which stand before God's throne,
And dwell in glorious light,
Praise ye the Lord each one !
You there so nigh, fitter than we
Dark sinners be, for things so high.

2. YOU BLESSED SOULS at rest,
Who see your Savior's face,
Whose glory, ev'n the least,
Is far above our grace,
God's praises sound, as in his sight
With sweet delight, you do abound.

3. ALL NATIONS of the earth
Extol the world's great King :
With melody and mirth
His glorious praises sing ;
For he still reigns, and will bring low
The proudest foe that him disdains.

4. Sing forth Jehovah's praise,
Ye SAINTS that on him call !
Magnify him always
His holy churches all !
In him rejoice, and there proclaim
His holy name with sounding voice.

5. MY SOUL, bear thou thy part,
Triumph in God above ;
And with a well-tuned heart,
Sing thou the songs of love.
Thou art his own, whose precious blood
Shed for thy good, his love made known.

A PSALM OF PRAISE.

6. He did in love begin,
Renewing thee by grace ;
Forgiving all thy sin,
Showed thee his pleased face.
He did thee heal, by his own merit ;
And by his Spirit, he did thee seal.
7. In saddest thoughts and grief,
In sickness, fears, and pain,
I cried for his relief,
And did not cry in vain.
He heard with speed, and still I found
Mercy abound in time of need.
8. Let not his praises grow,
On prosp'rous heights alone ;
But in the vales below
Let his great love be known !
Let no distress curb and control
My winged soul, and praise suppress.
9. Let not the fear or smart
Of his chastising rod,
Take off my fervent heart
From praising my dear God.
Still let me kneel, and to him bring
This offering, whate'er I feel.
10. Though I lose friends and wealth,
And bear reproach and shame ;
Though I lose ease and health,
Still let me praise God's name :
That fear and pain, which would destroy
My thanks and joy, do thou restrain.
11. Though human health depart
And flesh draw near to dust,
Let faith keep up my heart
To love God, true and just ;

And all my days, let no disease
Cause me to cease his joyful praise.

12. Though sin would make me doubt,
And fill my soul with fears ;
Though God seem to shut out
My daily cries and tears :
By no such frost of sad delays
Let thy sweet praise be nipp'd and lost.

13. Away distrustful care !
I have thy promise, Lord :
To banish all despair,
I have thy oath and word :
And therefore I shall see thy face,
And there thy grace shall magnify.

14. Though sin and death conspire
To rob thee of thy praise,
Still tow'rds thee I'll aspire ;
And thou dull hearts canst raise.
Open thy door ; and when grim death
Shall stop this breath, I'll praise thee more.

15. With thy triumphant flock,
Then shall I numb'red be ;
Built on th' eternal rock,
His glory we shall see.
The heavens so high with praise shall ring,
And all shall sing in harmony.

16. The sun is but a spark
From the eternal light ;
Its brightest beams are dark
To that most glorious sight.
There the whole choir, with one accord,
Shall praise the Lord for evermore.

